

THE FALLACY OF DEMOLITION-ONLY POLICY:  
AN EXAMINATION OF THE INTERSECTION OF RACE AND RIGHTSIZING IN  
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

A Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School

of Cornell University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of

Master of Arts

by

Olivia Holley White

May 2017

© 2017 Olivia Holley White

## ABSTRACT

This thesis critiques rightsizing policies in Baltimore, Maryland. It analyzes Project C.O.R.E. and the effect it will have on the neighborhood of Sandtown-Winchester. This thesis argues that rightsizing policies have and will continue to have a negative impact on low-income, predominately African-American neighborhoods in the city by destroying the cultural and built environment and their historic resources. It asserts that rightsizing is a short-sighted public policy.

The work argues this claim by first providing a history of the city of Baltimore emphasizing how racialized policies shaped the built environment. It analyzes the urban policies of the late 20th century that were designed to revitalize Sandtown-Winchester. This thesis reviews of rightsizing as urban policy, and ends with recommendations for how the city can manage vacant properties in a more equitable and fair way. The recommendations suggest rightsizing policies be reformed in order to reconsider the effect that they have on disinvested minority populations.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Olivia White was born in Las Vegas, Nevada on December 27, 1991. In 2010 Olivia graduated from Parkview Arts & Science Magnet High School in Little Rock Arkansas, and began her undergraduate education at Saint Louis University in Saint Louis, Missouri.

At Saint Louis University Olivia pursued a Bachelor of Arts and double-majored in American Studies and International Studies, with a minor in Urban Poverty Studies. Olivia was a recipient of the Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarship. In the spring of 2014 she interned for Michael R. Allen at the Preservation Research Office. Under the guidance of Professor Benjamin Looker, Olivia completed her senior capstone paper '*An Urban Oasis'? Transformations and Mythologies of Saint Louis University's Frost Campus 1987-2013*' in American Studies. She graduated *cum laude* from Saint Louis University in May 2014 as a member of the Alpha Sigma Nu Jesuit Honor Society.

Olivia began her coursework in Historic Preservation Planning at Cornell University in the fall of 2015. During the summer of 2016 she interned with the Nevada Preservation Foundation in Las Vegas, Nevada. Olivia will graduate from Cornell University on May 28, 2017 with a Master of Arts in Historic Preservation Planning.

For Tani and Larry White, who have made all things possible.

And for Benjamin Looker, whose remarkable teaching inspired this journey.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to my committee chair Jeffrey Chusid and committee member Michael Tomlan for all of their support and guidance throughout this process.

I would like to thank the Historic Preservation Planning Alumni for awarding me the Barclay Jones Research Grant. It was through their generous support that I was able to conduct research in Baltimore.

There are many people in Baltimore who took the time to meet with me and provide their insights and perspectives on the issues I was writing about. Thank you to Chad Hayes, Matt Hill, Eric Holcomb, Eli Pousson, Ann Sackey, William Scipio, and Tom Stosur. Thank you to Saul Gibusiwa at the Baltimore City Archives for facilitating my visit and assisting me with my research.

Thank you to my Historic Preservation Planning cohort for their support and friendship.

Thank you to Maryam Rabi and Shannon Cilento, who took the time to read and comment on my drafts. Thank you to Jennifer Rowan for Photoshop assistance. Thank you also to Paige Barnum who generously gave her time to create maps for this work that poignantly illustrate my arguments in a way that words cannot.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Biographical Sketch	iii
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Table of Contents	vi
List of Figures	vii
List of Illustrations	viii
Introduction	1
Chapter 1: History of Baltimore City	11
Chapter 2: The Challenges of Community Planning: A review of revitalization efforts in Sandtown-Winchester	57
Chapter 3: Rightsizing History, Implementation, and Relation to Historic Preservation	87
Chapter 4: Rightsizing Gets it Wrong: An Evaluation of Project C.O.R.E. and Alternative Solutions for Vacant Properties in Sandtown-Winchester	124
Conclusion	170
Bibliography	175

## LIST OF FIGURES

1.1	Philip Jones' 1730 Survey	15
1.2	Map of Baltimore 1801	18
1.3	Poppleton's Plat 1822	19
1.4	Home Owners Residential Security Map 1937	45
2.1	Map of Sandtown-Winchester Boundaries	58
2.2	Sandtown-Winchester Improvement Association Flyer 1978	61
2.3	Advertisement for cooperative housing in Sandtown-Winchester 1984	63
3.1	Green Dot Map New Orleans 2006	96
3.2	Housing Market Typology Map 2014	112
4.1	Housing Market Typology Overlay with racial demographics	141
4.2	Racial demographic map overlay with percent vacant housing	142



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1.1	View of 920 Lemmon Street	21
1.2	3-story rowhouses in Sandtown-Winchester	27
1.3	1904 Fire of Baltimore	31
1.4	Sparrows Point Shipbuilding	42
1.5	National Guardsmen during the 1968 riots	49
2.1	Habitat for Humanity houses in Sandtown-Winchester	70
2.2	Hae Tteuneum Market Sandtown-Winchester	83
4.1	Demolition of North Stricker Street 2016	139
4.2	Mural on Gilmor Homes	168

## INTRODUCTION

On April 12, 2015, the Baltimore Police Department arrested Freddie Gray, a young African-American man, at 1700 Presbury Street in the Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood of West Baltimore. His subsequent death as a result of injuries he sustained during his unrestrained transport in a police van across town sparked protests throughout the area nine days later. On April 25, protesters marched through Sandtown-Winchester on the very streets where Gray grew up. The marches were powerful rebukes of police brutality in Baltimore, but they also had the unintended consequence of shedding light on the urban condition of African-American residents living in one of the poorest neighborhoods of the city. As the cameras panned down the streets, an image entirely synonymous with Baltimore itself formed the backdrop: block after block of rowhouses. These were often not the rowhouses of John Water's cinematic Baltimore, though, as on television it appeared that every other house was vacant, with boarded up windows and doors, weeds growing up around the stoops, and decaying cornice brackets.

To those unfamiliar with the city, and even to some Baltimoreans, these images of apparent urban decay that splashed across the nightly news for weeks, came as a surprise. While the city's vacant property inventory has been growing steadily since the 1970s, this fact was not a high-profile news story the way that it has been in cities such as Cleveland or Detroit. Suddenly the city's vacant building problem, a paramount symbol of urban decline, was on display for the nation to see.

The protests also revealed another related reality of Baltimore, that inner-city neighborhoods did not display the same vitality as the revitalized inner harbor. As described by one protester, “The unrest was about more than Freddie Gray's death. This was also about residents tired of feeling abandoned and neglected within the city. They saw all the investment in the Inner Harbor but felt like their community was forgotten.”<sup>1</sup> This sentiment was echoed by resident Tanisha Lewis who said “I have to go outside my community to go to the supermarket...there are some really good people here...[but] there's no investment.”<sup>2</sup>

Ashamed that their local problems had suddenly appeared on the national stage, city government officials devised a plan to address them. In addition to a broken police system and the distrust and disdain of many residents who felt disenfranchised, the city was forced to reevaluate its approach towards managing vacant properties. And while the city's problems impacted many neighborhoods, they were all playing out in the microcosm of Sandtown-Winchester, a community that had experienced the ebbs and flows of revitalization over the years, but was once again in decline.

Baltimore has had programs in place to address vacant buildings since the 1970s. Each program has been a response tailored to a particular political and economic climate in the city's history, and has achieved varying degrees of success. Following the events of April 2015, Baltimore embarked on its largest investment yet in attempting to solve the problem of blighted properties across the city. On January 5,

---

<sup>1</sup> Ron Snyder, “One year later: looking back at the Baltimore riots,” *WBAL-TV*, April 28, 2016, <http://www.wbal.com/article/one-year-later-looking-back-at-the-baltimore-riots/7100345>.

<sup>2</sup> Noah Bierman and Joseph Tanfani, “In Baltimore, riots appear where urban renewal didn't,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 28, 2015.

2016, Governor Larry Hogan and then Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake announced Project Creating Opportunities for Renewal and Enterprise, better known as Project C.O.R.E., only a few blocks away from where Gray was arrested. The goal of Project C.O.R.E. is to demolish 4,000 vacant buildings across the city over the course of four years. The initiative is divided into two phases; Phase I, the demolition phase, is funded through a \$75 million investment from the state, and \$18.5 million from Baltimore City. Phase II, the redevelopment phase, officials claim will be funded by extracting \$600 million from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development programs towards new investment in communities affected by Phase I demolitions.<sup>3</sup>

For over ten years, many cities that have lost 20 percent or more of their population during the latter half of the 20th century, have adopted public policy initiatives that involve widespread demolition of the built environment. Since 2014 Detroit has demolished over 10,000 properties at an average cost of \$12,619 each. In 2016 alone there were 3,136 demolitions.<sup>4</sup> Massive demolition programs in these cities inspired architect and professor Keller Easterling to remark that “the major building project for most U.S. mayors today is the removal of building.”<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> “Four Year Plan,” *Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development*, <http://dhcd.maryland.gov/ProjectCORE/Pages/Plan.aspx>.

<sup>4</sup> “Detroit Demolition Program,” *City of Detroit*, accessed January 31, 2017, <http://www.detroitmi.gov/demolition>.

<sup>5</sup> Keller Easterling, “Letters to the Mayor,” exhibition at the Storefront for Art and Architecture, April 30, 2014-May 24, 2014, <http://kellereasterling.com/exhibitions/letters-to-the-mayor>.

The roots of widespread demolition as planning theory and practice is rightsizing. Rightsizing is defined as restructuring the built environment in order to match the current and projected size of the population to the size of the built environment. As described by Brent D. Ryan, professor of Urban Design and Public Policy at the Massachusetts Institute for Technology, “rightsizing refers to the yet unproved process of bringing cities down to a “right” size, meaning a size proportionate to city government’s ability to pay for itself.”<sup>6</sup> At first glance, rightsizing appears to be an appropriate policy response for the problems it seeks to address. Older industrial cities have high levels of vacancy and abandonment, vacant properties are closely linked with crime and draining tax revenues, these cities do not have a housing market that can support saving thousands of vacant properties, thus demolishing these properties is the most obvious solution.<sup>7</sup>

Concerned with the effect that widespread demolition policies might have on historic buildings, preservationists have recently been advocating for more consideration of these resources in rightsizing planning. While it would appear that demolition policies and historic preservation are inherently at odds, to some preservationists the two can exist in tandem. Through both their respective master’s theses and careers, Cara Bertron and Emilie Evans have attempted to define the role

---

<sup>6</sup> Brent D. Ryan, “Rightsizing Shrinking Cities: The urban design dimension,” in *The City After Abandonment*, ed. Margaret Dewar and June Manning Thomas, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 268.

<sup>7</sup> Witold Rybczynski and Peter D Linneman, “How to save our shrinking cities,” *Public Interest* 135, (1999): 30-44.

that historic preservation should play in rightsizing initiatives.<sup>8</sup> Bertron is the Director of the Preservation Rightsizing Network, a coalition of planners, preservationists, community development organizations, and other stakeholders working together to develop tools and strategies for influencing planning policies. Evans is the Secretary of this group, and is the Director of the Rightsizing Cities Initiative with the preservation consulting firm PlaceEconomics. Evans previously worked as Detroit Preservation Specialist, and lead the windshield surveys that helped decision makers make choices about what would be demolished in the city. Bertron, who during a 2014 lecture at the University of the Arts said “our job as preservationists is to argue *for* rightsizing,” thinks that arguing for “strategic demolition” is one way to help the preservation profession gain greater respect in planning circles.<sup>9</sup>

What proponents of rightsizing have yet to address is how the racial composition of a neighborhood factors in rightsizing planning. Failing to address race as a metric is problematic because the majority of abandonment in shrinking cities is in disinvested, predominantly minority population neighborhoods. Thus, in the context of majority African-American neighborhoods like Sandtown-Winchester, widespread demolition policies become more than just misguided policy decisions. It becomes an issue of social justice by raising questions about who ‘shrinking cities’ are being restructured for, and who benefits from this restructuring.

---

<sup>8</sup> See Cara Berton “Between a rock and a historic place: preservation in Postindustrial Urban Planning,” (master’s thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 2011) and Emilie Evans “Historic Preservation in Shrinking Cities: Neighborhood Strategies for Buffalo and Cleveland,” (master’s thesis, Columbia University, 2011).

<sup>9</sup> Ashley Hahn, “Pro-demolition preservationists? Cara Bertron explores rightsizing and demolition.” *PlanPhilly*, February 14, 2014, <http://planphilly.com/eyesonthestreet/2014/02/14/pro-demolition-preservationists-cara-bertron-explores-rightsizing-and-preservation>.

### *Statement of Purpose*

This thesis critiques the rightsizing of American cities through an examination of Project C.O.R.E. and the projected impact it will have on the Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood of Baltimore, Maryland. It suggests that as a result of this initiative, the city will lose valuable cultural and architectural resources, particularly in Sandtown-Winchester. Current planning theory suggests that rightsizing policies are the most appropriate and effective response to vacancy and abandonment in shrinking cities. Furthermore, current theorizing poses that rightsizing will improve cities by targeting investment in so-called “middle neighborhoods” that are the most stable or have the greatest potential for revitalization. Proponents of rightsizing claim that this strategy will save shrinking cities by targeting reinvestment in the most viable areas while strategically demolishing other areas to make these cities smaller and more economically sound. This thesis rejects these notions for three reasons. The first is that rightsizing policies generally do not take historic resources into proper consideration. The second is that because neighborhoods with high levels of vacant properties are more likely to be minority neighborhoods, widespread demolition policies destroy the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of minority communities. This is problematic not only because of the racist nature of the policy reminiscent of urban renewal policies of the mid-20th century, but because it creates a radically racialized city in which majority white neighborhoods with more stable housing markets are not demolished and predominantly minority neighborhoods with higher vacancy rates are erased. The third problem with these policies is that they are a shortsighted, misguided way to deal with complex, wide-ranging urban problems. Rightsizing addresses the

symptom of neighborhood appearance, while ignoring deeper, more complex problems related to urban blight and abandonment.

This thesis ultimately argues that rightsizing is an unjust policy that perpetuates the racist legacy of city planning as a discipline. It suggests that Project C.O.R.E. will disadvantage historically African-American communities in Baltimore, Maryland, and that this is a negative outcome from an equity standpoint. Rightsizing is morally problematic because it values the built and cultural landscapes of certain racial and ethnic groups over others. This thesis posits that Baltimore should pursue more inclusive and democratic planning strategies that benefit and include the city's diverse population.

### ***Note on Terminology***

There are several terms repeated in this thesis that require clarification for the sake of the argument. In this work, legacy city or legacy cities refers to cities in the United States of America with populations over 100,000 people that have lost at least 25 percent of their populations over the past 40 years. Synonyms for this term employed in this thesis include "shrinking cities," and "Rust Belt cities." The phrase "vacant buildings" refers to properties that are not currently inhabited. In the context of this thesis the term "vacant" or "vacancy" refers to properties that are not currently formally inhabited. This term will be used interchangeably with "abandoned building" or "abandoned property," which is defined as a property where the owner has ceased



to maintain the building, physically, financially, or otherwise.<sup>10</sup> The term rightsizing here refers to the physical restructuring of the footprint of cities to better match the size of the population. This word is spelled differently in various literature, thus quotes may read “right-sizing” or “right sizing,” but should be considered synonymous. The neighborhood of concern in this work is called Sandtown-Winchester. It is apart of a larger area of the city that will be referred to as West Baltimore that encompasses 21 total neighborhoods. Prior to formal neighborhood distinctions, the entire area was historically known as Old West Baltimore. The names “Old West Baltimore” and “West Baltimore” will be used synonymously in this work.

### ***Methodology***

Much of the primary source research involved reading the extensive reporting published over the decades in the *Baltimore Sun* accessed through the Cornell University Library System. Additional sources included planning journals such as the *Journal of the American Planning Association*, also found in the Cornell University Library System. City plans were accessed through city government websites. A visit to Baltimore allowed for both empirical research through visiting Sandtown-Winchester, as well as for the gleaning information from interview subjects. A trip to the Baltimore City Archives allowed the author to access documents from the Department of Planning.

---

<sup>10</sup> Alan Mallach, *Bringing Buildings Back: from abandoned properties to community assets: a Guidebook for Policymakers and Practitioners*, (Montclair, N.J.: New Brunswick, N.J.: National Housing Institute; Distributed by Rutgers University Press, 2006), 1.

Additional secondary source research in the Cornell Library System included books such as *Baltimore: The Building of an American City* which was the author's main source for the history of the city. A number of other texts helped frame the author's thoughts on the role of historic preservation in rightsizing cities including Max Page's *Why Preservation Matters*.

### ***Limitations***

This thesis is limited by a number of factors. The first is that the author has never lived in Sandtown-Winchester or the City of Baltimore. Lacking this intimacy with the subject, the author's understanding of the problems and promises of the place is necessarily constrained. Another limitation is that the author does not identify with the racial identity she claims will be negatively affected by these policies. Considering that discourses on the effects of rightsizing are relatively new, there is limited research available on this subject. An additional limitation is that the author has never lived in an area that has been affected by rightsizing policies. And finally, this is a complex subject that has been fomenting for decades, and this thesis cannot hope to fully address or even describe the multiple narratives, situations, decisions, or forces at work in Baltimore.

### ***Chapter Overview***

The first chapter provides a history of the City of Baltimore with an emphasis on race relations, urban planning, and economic forces that have shaped the city. This chapter provides context to the analysis of the city's current planning. Chapter Two is

a discussion and evaluation of past revitalization efforts in the Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood as well as a description of the neighborhood today. This chapter is meant to provide context for the suggestions for future revitalization efforts. The third chapter provides a history of rightsizing as a planning policy, and examines the effects it has had on cities thus far. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a framework for analyzing rightsizing policy in Baltimore. Chapter Four is an examination of the history of Baltimore's vacant-building initiatives and an analysis of how other strategies besides demolition can have a positive effect on Sandtown-Winchester. The conclusion argues that Project C.O.R.E. and rightsizing policies more broadly are damaging for cities, and suggests that further research is needed to understand the links between issues of race, rightsizing, and preservation.

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE HISTORY OF BALTIMORE CITY

Baltimore was an important early colonial city that became and remained an industrial and manufacturing hub throughout the mid-19th century. By the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, however, Baltimore struggled to keep pace and was surpassed in population by cities like Chicago, St. Louis, and Cleveland. The rowhouse became established as the vernacular architectural form as early as the 1790s, and remains the predominant residential building type found in the city. As a city near the Mason-Dixon line, Baltimore has had to reconcile with the interests of residents on both sides of the coin on matters related to race relations, not only during the Civil War era, but throughout its history. While Baltimore had a more diverse economy than many other industrial cities, deindustrialization and suburbanization following World-War II negatively impacted the size of the population of the city, as well as the number of occupied housing units. Ashamed of the image of the inner-city, in 1974 Baltimore rebranded itself with the nickname “Charm City,” to attract new residents and tourists and improve its reputation.<sup>1</sup> Today Baltimore struggles to balance the interests of its tourist and service-sector economy with the needs of a multitude of lower-income neighborhoods with significant numbers of vacant properties.

---

<sup>1</sup> James D. Dilts, “In \$40,000 tourist drive: Ad dubs Baltimore ‘Charm City,’ *Baltimore Sun*, July 11, 1974.

The history of the city is told in this chapter in six sections: Colonial history, the city's founding through the 1820s; industrialization and immigration to the 1850s; the origins of the Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood to the end of the century; the fire of 1904 through the Great Depression; the Post-World War II urban crisis; and contemporary Baltimore. This overview focuses primarily on three major themes of the city's history: city planning, the economy, and the African-American history of Baltimore.

### ***Colonial Baltimore***

The City of Baltimore is located on the northern end of the Chesapeake Bay in the state of Maryland. Prior to colonization, the area had been inhabited by the Susquehannock Indian tribes for hundreds of years. The area was first explored by the English in 1609, led by Captain John Smith. In 1634 the settlers formed an official colony led by Leonard Calvert. By 1650 the proprietor of the colony, Lord Baltimore, had begun issuing land grants of approximately one thousand acres in the area.<sup>2</sup> These early land owners were granted the right to collect taxes and fees and had control over the future sale of the land. Early colonists grew tobacco, which quickly became the common currency of the settlement. Subsistence farming, the tobacco trade, and the slave economy sustained the colony.

Baltimore, named after Lord Baltimore, was founded in 1730. The primary reason settlers started a colony in the Baltimore area is because of the advantages that

---

<sup>2</sup> Sherry H. Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 2.

the landscape offered. The most critical resource to the establishment of colonies in the New World was water. Baltimore had land suitable for farming and also had abundant water resources. Aside from the Bay, Baltimore had a series of streams and waterfalls due to its topographic configuration. The region can be understood topographically as distinguished by the piedmont, or the high lands, and the tidewater, or the lowlands surrounding the bay. In the early 1700s settlers began to build mills on the waterfalls. These included Jones Falls, Gwynns Falls, Gwynns Run, Great Gunpowder, and Little Gunpowder.<sup>3</sup> The mills helped diversify the area's largely tobacco-based economy by allowing them to make new products such as flour. This became crucial to the economy of the new colony when the price of tobacco declined for a significant period of time beginning in 1732.<sup>4</sup>

The early settlers in Baltimore were mostly English and French. One quarter of the slaves in what would become the state of Maryland were brought between 1710 and 1720. In 1715 the Maryland assembly formally declared that the sons and daughters of slaves are born slaves.<sup>5</sup> Blacks made up one-sixth of the population in 1715, and the majority of slaves worked on tobacco plantations.

'Baltimore Town,' was officially founded and planned in 1730 (Figure 1.1). The early city was laid out in a manner similar to that of an early English village. The new 'town' had two perpendicular streets, each 66-feet-wide. Long Street, now

---

<sup>3</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 5.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 4.

Baltimore Street, was a longitudinal street intended to be a place for businesses.

Calvert Street, a latitudinal street, ran from the waterfront at the harbor to the bluff overlooking Jones Falls. This plan platted sixty one-acre square lots.<sup>6</sup> The early street plans were created not only to exploit the waterfront, where trade through the harbor was essential to the survival of the town, but also to provide a natural drainage route from the piedmont to the bay. Two years after Baltimore was laid out, Jones Town was laid out directly east of Jones Falls into half-acre lots on ten acres.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 7.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

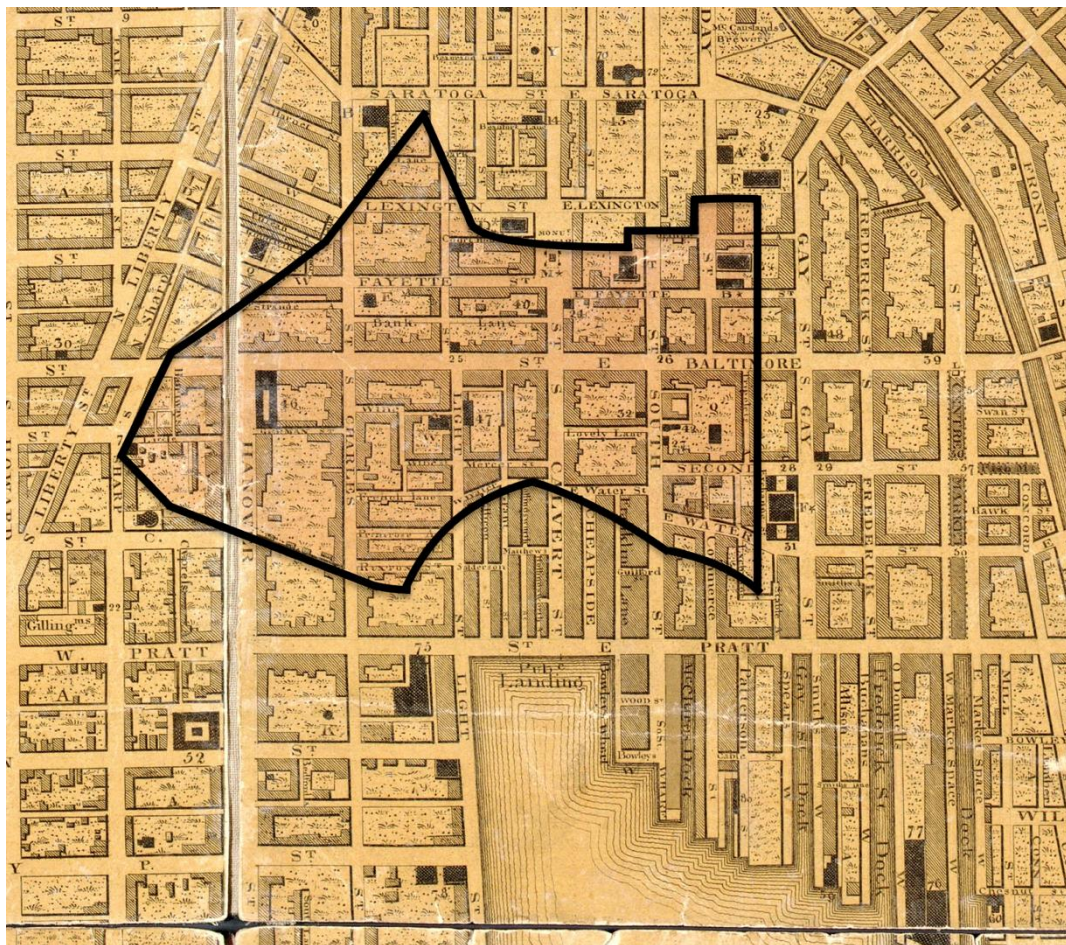


Figure 1.1. Close-up of Poppleton's 1822 plat of the City of Baltimore, with Phillip Jones' 1730 survey of the city outlined. Courtesy of the Library of Congress Geography & Map Division.

After the French and Indian War and prior to the Revolution it became important to the town to connect Fells Point and Baltimore Town. The land between these two places became known as Harrison's marsh, and Baltimore Town was authorized to annex, wharf out, and fill this area. In 1779 the marsh was surveyed and platted, adding one hundred and thirty-five acres to the city.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 13.



When the city incorporated in 1796, the population neared 25,000 people, making Baltimore the third largest city in the United States after New York and Philadelphia.<sup>9</sup> The growth of the city's population was in part fueled by an increase in French immigration. Between 1785 and 1815 the French population increased by tenfold and the French made up one third of the city. French immigrants were typically highly skilled and held positions as doctors, merchants, and shopkeepers. They brought with them Catholicism, and helped establish St. Mary's Seminary, which would become crucial in the development of Catholic education, as well as making Baltimore an administrative center of the faith in the United States.<sup>10</sup>

The 1790s were also when the rowhouse became a popular building form in the city. After touring Europe, architect Charles Bulfinch came back to America in 1793 and proposed building a series of sixteen three-story houses all three bays wide in Boston. Bulfinch learned these building concepts in England, and used Palladian ideas as inspiration for the design of the primary facades for these houses.<sup>11</sup> These designs were later copied by Thomas McElderry and Cumberland Dugan, who began constructing rowhouses in Baltimore in 1796.<sup>12</sup> After constructing wharves extending from Market Street, they built long rows of houses on either side that were three-and one-half stories tall with hipped roofs and dormer windows. They also had high

---

<sup>9</sup> Mary Ellen Hayward and Charles Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999), 20.

<sup>10</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 29.

<sup>11</sup> Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 16.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

English basements that provided for commercial space at the wharf level, and had prominent stone stringcourses. Others builders followed suit, including John O'Donnell, who built two rows of six houses facing one another on Commerce Street, and Richard Canton, who constructed four three-and-one-half story three-bay-wide rowhouses at present day Lombard and Front Streets.<sup>13</sup>

Important to the construction of both residential and commercial properties in Baltimore at the time was the ground rent system. Originating from an English custom of exacting a tithe from yeoman farmers who farmed on a noble's land, through the ground rent system land is rented for lengthy periods of time to others who then build upon the land. The builder can occupy the site or collect rents from building tenants, while he or she pays the ground rent to the landowner.<sup>14</sup> This system was introduced to Baltimore by Thomas Harrison who began renting lots in 1750. Builders leased the land for an annual fee with renewals and no down payment. To enhance investments, some ground renters offered advanced mortgages to builders. This incentive gave builders a loan to pay for construction costs, and increased the return for landowners.<sup>15</sup> While common in early British-American colonies of Pennsylvania and Maryland, eventually the ground rent system fell out of use and favor in many places except Baltimore.<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 18.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 13.

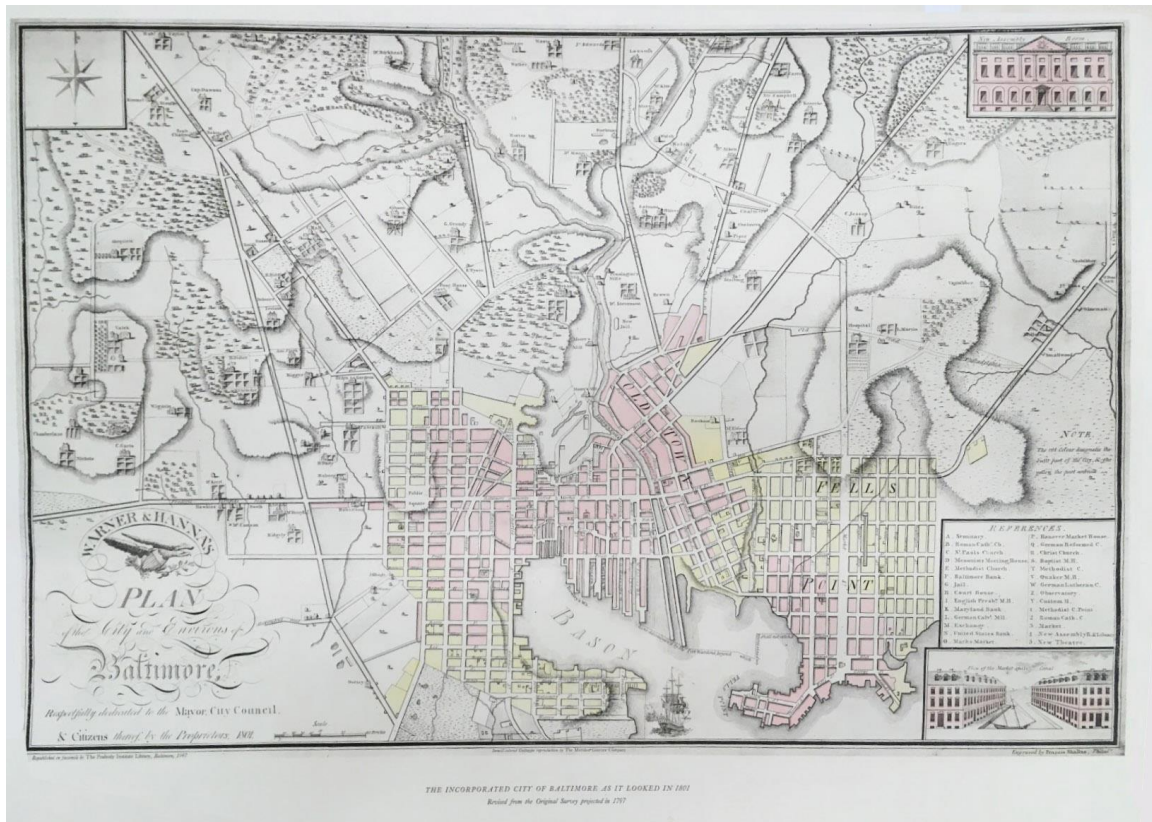


Figure 1.2. 1801 Map of Baltimore showing the parts of city ‘Old Town,’ and ‘Fell’s Point.’ Courtesy of Cornell Library Map & Geospatial Information Collection.

With the ground rent system in place and the population growing, the city required a new plat. In 1816 Thomas H. Poppleton became chief surveyor for the city and he was charged with surveying and laying out the grid for the extension of the city after its acreage had tripled through annexation. In this plat Poppleton created new roads and extended existing ones, but did not include any public squares. Instead the grid pattern was all residential blocks, extended based on the older part of town’s one-acre squares.<sup>17</sup> Poppleton also created a street hierarchy that included front streets, side streets, and alley “streets” of differing widths.<sup>18</sup> Poppleton’s plat, as it became

<sup>17</sup> Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 29.

<sup>18</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 57.

known, created a pattern that dictated future construction in the city, including the possibility for alley dwellings to be built.



Figure 1.3. Poppleton's Plat, 1822. Courtesy of the Library of Congress Geography & Map Division.

### ***Boom Town on the Bay***

One of the prominent enterprises in early Baltimore was the railroad industry. The Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Company consolidated in 1827, making it one of the oldest railroad companies in the United States. This allowed Baltimore to compete

economically with cities that were prospering from increasing trade with more western states through canals.<sup>19</sup> The construction of the railroad soon became the metric for land speculation in the city since landowners hoped that having the railroad come through their part of town would increase their own property values.<sup>20</sup> The incorporation of the railroad also spurred the growth of supporting industries such as machine works, foundries, and bridge construction. Warehouses and factories were built along the waterfront, and the profits of these companies allowed the new elites to construct fashionable residential properties.<sup>21</sup>

As industry prospered, the city needed to house not only the wealthy industrialists, but also the burgeoning working class. The new rowhouses built in the mid-1800s to house members of this class continued to be built in the Greek Revival style. Builder Michael Roche, who had already been constructing homes for wealthier Baltimoreans, built a large number of two-and-one-half story rowhomes for workers. Called “two story and attic” dwellings, these modest houses were two stories tall and two bays (approximately 14-feet) wide, with attic windows that provided the appearance of a third story. This half-story attic could be divided into two separate rooms, which provided more living space for large families, or for those who took in boarders for extra money. Constructed in working class neighborhoods between 1845 and 1855, they provided housing for people who could not afford to take public

---

<sup>19</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 73.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 74.

<sup>21</sup> Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 35-36.



transportation to their jobs. These houses were built in the Fells Point and Federal Hill neighborhoods, early maritime communities close to the harbor, as well as in the rapidly growing areas west of downtown.<sup>22</sup>



Illustration 1.1. 918-920 Lemmon Street example of two-story plus attic Greek Revival rowhouses built in the 1840s for working class residents, currently the Irish Railroad Workers Museum. Photograph by Dr. John R. Breihan.

The growth of the railroad industry along with the construction of the Ohio state canals brought new immigrants to Baltimore during the 1830s. In 1830 and again two years later the immigrant population doubled. The majority of immigrants came from England, Germany, and Ireland.<sup>23</sup> The Irish population in the city settled just

---

<sup>22</sup> Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 39.

<sup>23</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 91.

west of downtown on West Pratt Street northeast of and within walking distance of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad's Mt. Clare Yards. This community continued to grow through the 1840s as more Irish arrived and became employed by the rapidly growing railroad industry.<sup>24</sup>

Before the Civil War, Baltimore's African-American population included both free blacks and slaves. While Baltimoreans generally believed that slaves in the city were treated better than slaves on plantations throughout the state, city slave owners still had brutal ownership privileges, such as the right to take their slaves to the local jail to be whipped.<sup>25</sup> Meanwhile, free blacks in the city sought education through various means including in church, but were denied entry into public schools despite the fact that they paid taxes that supported those schools. In 1825, white citizens formed the Anti-Slavery society, which had its strongest membership among communities that did not have substantial slave populations.<sup>26</sup> In the debates about slavery in Baltimore, tensions arose from differences in opinion between city-dwellers and those living in the rest of the state. The state legislature's Brawner Commission recommended resettlement to Liberia as the only way to solve racial tensions. Many white abolitionist leaders in the city regarded this extreme position as an example of state oppression of Baltimore by the rural, slaveholding communities and interests.

---

<sup>24</sup> Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 40.

<sup>25</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 94.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 96.

Baltimoreans sought compromise on the issue of slavery but did not, as a city, take a strong stance either defending or decrying slavery.<sup>27</sup>

Despite this ambivalence, the leader and one of the most important figures of the abolitionist movement would pass through the city in the early 19th century. Frederick Douglass was brought to Baltimore as a young man in 1825 to run errands and look after the son of Hugh and Sophia Auld. Sophia began to teach Douglass to read, but Hugh forbid it. Douglass lived with the Auld's in Fells Point, on the 1400 block of Philpot Street, where he would often bribe the white boys in the neighborhood to teach him to read.<sup>28</sup> Although in reference to his time in Baltimore, Douglass described how “a city slave is almost a freeman” when compared to plantation slaves, he still faced significant discrimination.<sup>29</sup> In the 1830s, prior to his escape, Douglass worked as a shipyard's caulker, an almost all African-American profession. In this position he was constantly beaten and harassed by white workers, who were resentful about having to work with black men, and anxious that blacks would threaten whites' jobs.<sup>30</sup>

As the railroad and manufacturing industries grew, advancements in transportation technology changed the way that people traversed the city. The first horse-drawn omnibus line was organized in 1845 and made two daily trips to Towson,

---

<sup>27</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 98.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 94.

<sup>29</sup> Linda Shopes, “Fells Point: Community and Conflict in a Working-Class Neighborhood,” in *The Baltimore Book: New Views of Local History*, eds. Elizabeth Fee, Linda Shopes, and Linda Zeidman (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 125.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*



a rural farming community to the north of the city. The omnibus line also went between Fells Point and Canton, an approximately one-mile trip along the harbor.<sup>31</sup> These lines were laid along pre-existing routes that connected middle- and upper-class neighborhoods with business districts. The fare was expensive, so it could only be afforded by wealthier residents. Originally crossing noisy cobblestone streets, by the 1850s the horse-drawn carriages had iron wheels and travelled on iron tracks.<sup>32</sup>

The horse-drawn omnibuses would soon serve a greater purpose than transporting the wealthy across town; they would help create a city park system. Concerned over the increased pressure on the water supply, the city decided to develop Druid Lake into a reservoir and also a city park in the 1850s.<sup>33</sup> In order to finance the burgeoning park project the city levied twenty percent of the profits from fares on the omnibus lines. In 1860 the city was able to expand Patterson Park and to develop Druid Hill Park through purchasing the Rogers estate. After five years of levying the tax, the city had raised over \$9 million. City parks were seen as necessary not only for recreational purposes in an increasingly congested city, but also because they were perceived to be a public health solution to disease. The development of a park system in the city was also related to Baltimore trying to keep up with New York and Philadelphia, who already had numerous parks of their own.<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>31</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 112.

<sup>32</sup> Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 53.

<sup>33</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 137.

<sup>34</sup> Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 59.

### ***The Beginning of Sandtown, the Ending of a Unified Baltimore***

A pivotal moment in the history of the city was its divorce from the county in 1851. Leading up to this decision there were disputes over whether the city or the county should settle questions about representation, taxation, and criminal justice. When the city revised tax assessments in 1841, many within the city government accused the wealthy of tax evasion by claiming their summer country homes in the county as their main residences. In order to address these problems, the state of Maryland called for a constitutional convention in 1851. Along with other reforms, the new constitution separated the city and county of Baltimore from each other.<sup>35</sup>

The same year, Mayor John H.T. Jerome appointed the Boundary Avenue Commission to design a plan to expand open spaces by creating a 250-foot-wide parkway around the city. The commission wrote the report and the city surveyor created plats and profiles in order to determine the feasibility of the plan. The schemes would have cost a significant amount of money at the time, and would have required re-grading and rebuilding along the northern boundary. It would have also required cooperation between city and county. The main obstacle, however, was that Poppleton's orthogonal city design of 1816 could not accommodate all the alterations to the grid that would have been necessary for the Boundary Avenue scheme to be executed.<sup>36</sup>

---

<sup>35</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 135.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 136.

The story of the Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood dates back to 1857, when the city purchased the land to develop Lafayette Square Park on the west side of the city. The Civil War brought construction on the park and surrounding residential developments to a halt, and the area was an army camp and barracks for the duration of hostilities. Following the war, building resumed and three-story pressed-brick Italianate rowhouses were constructed throughout the area. Approximately three blocks southwest of Lafayette Square, Harlem Park was developed in the 1870s and 1880s.<sup>37</sup> The neighborhoods of Sandtown-Winchester and Harlem Park developed around these two parks, as well as Franklin and Union Squares, and became the new residential area for the middle- and upper-middle-class white elite. The neighborhoods were both close to the countryside and sited on higher ground, providing a view of the harbor.<sup>38</sup> The dominant mythology of how Sandtown received its name is that wagons travelling through the area from local quarries would spill sand on the ground.<sup>39</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 68.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>39</sup> Yvonne Wenger, "Saving Sandtown-Winchester: decade-long, multimillion-dollar investment questioned," *Baltimore Sun*, May 10, 2015.



Illustration 1.2. Example of three-story pressed brick Italianate rowhouses at the intersection of Baker and Gilmore Streets, Sandtown-Winchester. Photograph by author, November 17, 2016.

Harlem Park, just south of Sandtown-Winchester, was once a fifty-six-acre estate owned by Dr. Thomas Edmondson. When he died in 1856, the trustees of his estate donated ten acres of the land to be a public park. They then sold a block of land east of the park to Maryland Consolidated Land Company. Construction commenced in 1868 under the stipulation that the houses be three-stories-tall and sixteen-feet-wide. Maryland Consolidated both developed houses in the area themselves, as well as sold parcels to other developers.<sup>40</sup> The most prolific developer in Harlem Park was Joseph Cone, who by 1878 had built 145 houses near Harlem Park utilizing the popular architectural Italianate style of the period. On Fulton Avenue, Cone varied the

---

<sup>40</sup> Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 78.

style by adding oriels to the second and third story windows of the houses in order to break up the monotony of the repetitive buildings.<sup>41</sup>

Aiding the rapid urbanization that occurred in the city at the turn of the 20th century were new electric streetcars. The first electric overhead trolley was used in Virginia in 1888, and by 1890 Baltimore had its first streetcar line.<sup>42</sup> By mid-1893 there were eighty miles of overhead electric lines for streetcars across the city.<sup>43</sup> The old horse car companies quickly converted into electric systems, and consolidated in 1899 to form the United Railways & Electric Company. These new lines were able to carry more passengers than horse cars and could also move people twice as fast.<sup>44</sup>

As a result of the electric streetcar, for the first time it was possible for people outside the upper-class to live some distance from where they worked. The majority of suburbs that developed during the late 19th century in Baltimore were commuter suburbs. Developing from electric streetcar lines, suburbs like Roland Park, West Arlington, and Catonsville were designed for the upper-middle class. The development costs of creating these new communities were high since the cost of new water lines, streets, house building, and lighting were assumed by the development company. Roland Park became the model for future suburban developments in

---

<sup>41</sup> Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 80.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 85.

<sup>43</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 211.

<sup>44</sup> Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 85.

Baltimore. The streets of the new suburb curved in accordance with the contours of the land, a change from the grid-like development of the city.<sup>45</sup>

In 1888, the city held a referendum for the annexation of twenty-three square miles, almost tripling the area of the city, mostly to the north and west. The successful outcome of the vote led to a boom in the real estate industry as speculators bought up the new land to capture the increase of land values. At least 40,000 houses were built following the annexation, doubling the number of houses in the city. While other cities suffered a drop in construction in the 1890s, Baltimore fared better, and also had a higher percentage of homeowners. This housing boom not only employed a great number of people, but also benefitted the working and middle classes, who were able to purchase new houses.<sup>46</sup>

Along with annexation and the streetcar, another important factor in the building boom was the modernization of the construction industry, brought about by the introduction of new techniques and the standardization of existing ones. Baltimore brickmakers and bricklayers became well-known for the excellence of their work, and woodwork for doors and sashes came preformed from mills instead of being hand carved in a carpenter's shop. Most of the houses built during this time had cold water, one-fifth had bathtubs.<sup>47</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 213.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 219.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

While at this time housing segregation had not yet been solidified, and African-Americans could live across the city, many black residents lived in “Pigtown,” a neighborhood southwest Camden Station. They lived amongst Russian Jews and Italians, two of the other lower-class ethnic groups in the city at the time. The immigration of Italians to Baltimore in the 1890s led to many African-American’s being pushed out of jobs, including those on the railroad. Less than one percent of the city was comprised of black professionals.<sup>48</sup>

### ***Reforms for a ‘Greater Baltimore’***

In 1904 Baltimore suffered a large fire that destroyed much of what was laid out in 1730. Spurred by high winds and hampered by freezing temperatures, 1,545 buildings were destroyed over a 140-acre district.<sup>49</sup> The city had outlawed frame construction in 1799, but even the “fireproof” brick structures downtown could not withstand the flames.<sup>50</sup> Following the fire, the city made plats of each block and surveyed and marked the old building lines. Much of downtown was rebuilt by replicating what was there before the fire, and minor plat changes like the widening of streets were rare.<sup>51</sup> The fire also spurred another rowhouse building boom, in part to house the population which had doubled over the past twenty years.<sup>52</sup>

---

<sup>48</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 233-234.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 246.

<sup>50</sup> Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 25.

<sup>51</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 246.

<sup>52</sup> Mary Ellen Hayward and Frank R. Shivers Jr., eds., *The Architecture of Baltimore: An Illustrated History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 237.



Illustration 1.3. View of Baltimore Street between Calvert and Guilford Streets, with City Hall in the foreground, following the 1904 fire. Photograph courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society.

In spite of its rapid expansion in building, industry, and population, at the beginning of the twentieth century Baltimore was the only city of its size that did not have a modern sewer system.<sup>53</sup> A plan to remedy this, the “Greater Baltimore” strategy, was announced in 1903 but stalled because of the fire.<sup>54</sup> The plan was to create a dual system, one for storm water runoff and another for sanitation.<sup>55</sup> The completion of these systems transformed the city not just below ground, but also above ground as houses became connected and privies were abandoned. Modern

---

<sup>53</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 249.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 245.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 249.



sewage also changed the alleyways of city which were previously full of water drainage from laundry and other uses, which became layers of ice during the winter.<sup>56</sup> Another result of the sewage system were advancements in road planning. Jones Falls, for example, frequently presented a problem in planning in the city because of its tendency to flood, but through the sewer system it was canalized in a concrete channel and a road was put over it.<sup>57</sup>

The design of the sewage system forced Baltimore to pay for the mapping necessary to finally understand how to make sewage flow downhill. In turn, the new topographical survey served as the catalyst for addressing additional city planning issues and resulted in the creation of an annex street plan, the activities of a street paving commission, a factory site commission, and a city planning commission.<sup>58</sup> In this new era of planning the two topographical regions of the city became the focus: the piedmont and the tidewater. In the piedmont, a new street plan was developed for recently annexed lands that followed a conventional grid pattern and brought together previously developed streets. By 1902, the city required developers to submit plats for new subdivisions whereas previously these developments were carried out independently of other planned schemes in the city. Street grading became a major concern and priority of planning in 1908.<sup>59</sup> The more seriously Baltimore took the

---

<sup>56</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 251.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 253.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 254.

topographical realities exposed through the survey, the better it was able to plan for the future of the city.

During the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the black population of Baltimore increased as a result of the Great Migration. During the first wave of this migration, black residents came from both the rural south and rural areas of the state of Maryland. Forced to move away from these areas as a result of decreased farming yields, and drawn to the city by the promise of work in the industrial economy, between 1880 and 1920 the black population in Baltimore grew from 54,000 to 108,000.<sup>60</sup>

The beginning of the movement of African-Americans from south Baltimore to West Baltimore started in 1885. Before the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, there was not a predominantly African-American neighborhood in the city, and black residents lived amongst whites throughout the city.<sup>61</sup> As more residents moved in, however, blacks began moving out of overcrowded and unsanitary alley dwellings near Camden Yards to the area historically known as Old West Baltimore, located between North Avenue and Franklin Street to the north and south, and Madison and Fulton Streets to the east and west starting in 1885. As they moved in, the existing German population moved out to more northwestern parts of the city and county.<sup>62</sup> Druid Hill Avenue was home to upper-class African-Americans, while middle- and lower-class residents lived in smaller homes on the surrounding streets. The poorest residents in this area lived in

---

<sup>60</sup> Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 125, 154.

<sup>61</sup> Karen Olson, "Old West Baltimore: Segregation, African-American Culture, and the Struggle for Equality," in *The Baltimore Book: New Views of Local History*, eds. Elizabeth Fee, Linda Shopes, and Linda Zeidman (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 57.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

alley houses, small buildings located behind the street-facing rowhomes. While nearly all of these have since been demolished, one alley street, known as “Lung Block,” became infamous in the city because its rate of tuberculosis was astronomically higher than that found in the rest of the city.<sup>63</sup>

Although black residents both old and new had carved out a section of the west side of the city for themselves, they still faced significant discrimination in the early 20th century. When African-Americans came to Baltimore they found themselves in a challenging job market that enforced a racial hierarchy system. Black barbers struggled when the barbers examining board was created, and white laundresses received contracts with hospitals and restaurants while thousands of black laundresses worked at home and did not receive contracts. Although a new ten-hour labor law had recently been implemented, it did not apply to domestic work, a major industry for black women. Garment factories employed black women as pressers, the lowest-paid job, and at least one factory had a separate working floor and entrance for blacks.<sup>64</sup> In the building trades, black men were largely excluded except for work as hod carriers.

Segregation was also the policy in city schools. In spite of the massive increase in population, no new schools were constructed for blacks during this time. Between 1898 and 1915 all of the new African-American schools were older buildings passed down by white schools that had built new structures. Overcrowding was a major

---

<sup>63</sup> Karen Olson, “Old West Baltimore: Segregation, African-American Culture, and the Struggle for Equality,” in *The Baltimore Book: New Views of Local History*, eds. Elizabeth Fee, Linda Shopes, and Linda Zeidman (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 61.

<sup>64</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 274.

problem in these schools, and most students only went to school for half of the day. In addition, new child labor laws did not apply to black children, so many continued to work and did not go to school full-time, if at all. Black teachers and principals had autonomy in governance of their schools, but were not paid commensurately with whites in the same profession, nor were they given a path to promotion in the city education system.<sup>65</sup>

The housing market further solidified the segregation already occurring in the city. Immigration from Europe occurred contemporaneously with the migration of African-Americans to Baltimore, which increased the strain on an already overburdened housing market. While whites continued to prevent blacks from moving into their neighborhoods, the housing supply for blacks did not increase, and overcrowding was common. The rate at which the city expanded could not keep up with the rate of African-American migration to the city. The only black suburb at the time was Patapsco Park.<sup>66</sup> Demolition of existing housing further increased the strain on the housing supply for African-Americans. When the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Company expanded Camden Station, 200 houses occupied by black residents were razed. The creation of the St. Paul Street squares also meant the demolition of black housing. Decreasing supply led to increased rents, but instead of using the money to maintain and improve the buildings, landlords frequently pocketed the money. This cycle fed the slumlord dynasties that started during the era of legal housing

---

<sup>65</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 277.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 276.

segregation in the city between 1913 and 1917 and continued to affect the black housing market throughout the mid to late-20th century. African-Americans in the city consistently paid more for rent than their white counterparts for the same accommodations.<sup>67</sup>

During World War I, Baltimore capitalized upon its location and resources to try and prove its worth as an indispensable industrial and manufacturing hub. By 1917, Baltimore was the nation's seventh largest industrial area. At Sparrow's Point, the Bethlehem Steel Company underwent a major expansion, building a tin-plate mill and a mill for rolling steel plates for tanks and battleships. Bethlehem Steel eventually became the second-largest producer of steel in the country, and was the supplier for projects such as New York City's George Washington Bridge and San Francisco's Municipal Railway.<sup>68</sup> Shipbuilding became an important sector of the economy again and the Maryland Shipbuilding Company incorporated and hired two thousand workers. Wartime demand also increased the productivity of the labor force in the city. Manufacturing in the city increased by one third, and the value of manufactured products and exports tripled. After the war, Bethlehem Steel continued to be an important part of the local economy.<sup>69</sup> The war increased Baltimore's status as an important industrial city because it allowed the city to prove what it was capable of producing and contributing to the economy.

---

<sup>67</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 277.

<sup>68</sup> Patricia Fernandez-Kelly, *The Hero's Fight: African-Americans in West Baltimore and the Shadow of the State* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2015), 47.

<sup>69</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 295.

In the post-World War I era, the city began to implement new, modern planning procedures and techniques that shaped the way Baltimore looks today. In 1918 the city annexed sixty-two square miles of mostly undeveloped land, nearly tripling its size.<sup>70</sup> The increase in land provided new opportunities for developers, but also forced the city to deal with planning issues in a more structured way than it had previously. Once again a topographical map was created in order to create street plans that included water, gas, and electric lines and conduits. The annexation also increased the pressure for comprehensive planning, and a separate City Plan Commission, Public Improvements Commission, and a Port Development Commission were created. The city passed a zoning ordinance and adopted a general street plan. The main goal of the zoning ordinance was to regulate densities. Baltimore mapped the city based on three metrics: building height zones, land use zones, and zones for number of dwellings permitted per residential acre. The city created a hierarchical system for land development under which only single, detached, residential dwellings could be built on the most valuable land, rowhouses and detached housing could be built on the second tier of land, and apartments as well as the aforementioned housing types could all be built on the third tier of land. In the new land use system, dwellings could be built in business zones, and businesses could be built in industrial zones, but the reverse of either of these was not permitted.<sup>71</sup>

During the interwar period, the racial discrimination across different sectors of the city worsened. Development of public facilities, for example, did not proceed at

---

<sup>70</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 302.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 318.

the same rate for whites and blacks. A swimming pool was built for whites in Druid Hill Park, and a smaller pool was built for African-Americans. The number of black students attending school doubled during the 1920s. All thirteen black schools were housed in secondhand buildings, and many were recommended for demolition because they were not suitable for use. The types of vocational training offered in these schools were designed to feed the limited industries open to blacks post-graduation.<sup>72</sup> Forced to work lower-class jobs in various service industries, as laborers in fertilizer plants, and in coal and lumber yards, economic and social advancement remained difficult for blacks to achieve.<sup>73</sup>

Racial discrimination in housing also became worse in the city. While the city's segregation ordinance had been deemed unconstitutional, developers found other methods to impose segregation on the landscape. In the newly annexed land, the Roland Park Company that developed the land used racially restrictive covenants in deeds in order to prevent African-Americans from moving out of the central city. By the 1930s, the 'old city,' or the original 19<sup>th</sup> century areas of Baltimore were thirty percent black, while the land from the two annexations was around half of that, at seventeen percent.<sup>74</sup>

While densities in African-American areas were similar to those of immigrant neighborhoods along the harbor in the late 19th century, density had since become

---

<sup>72</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 326.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 327.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 325.

associated with overcrowding, regardless of whether overcrowding was actually occurring. Since these high-density areas were known to be majority black, and began to be seen as problematic, urban problems became synonymous with the “Negro problem.”<sup>75</sup> In 1934, W.W. Emmart conducted a housing study for the Real Estate Board, in which he concluded that a half dozen neighborhoods formed a belt of blight in the core of the city and should be demolished or thinned in order to curb “crime, delinquency, and dependency.”<sup>76</sup> Many of these areas were the same ones targeted in Janet Kemp’s 1907 *Housing Conditions in Baltimore* which was concerned with several areas that had high densities and high rates of tuberculosis.<sup>77</sup>

In spite of the challenges black residents had gaining access to the same opportunities and neighborhoods in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Old West Baltimore was the center of a thriving black entertainment district. Pennsylvania Avenue featured theaters, bars, nightclubs, and shopping centers. Big name musicians such as Cab Calloway, Duke Ellington, Dizzy Gillespie, and Count Bassie, all performed at the Douglass Theater, later renamed The Royal. Both Ella Fitzgerald and Billie Holliday were regulars there.<sup>78</sup> Many of the businesses, including the Royal, were owned by

---

<sup>75</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 326.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 170.

<sup>78</sup> Karen Olson, “Old West Baltimore: Segregation, African-American Culture, and the Struggle for Equality,” in *The Baltimore Book: New Views of Local History*, eds. Elizabeth Fee, Linda Shopes, and Linda Zeidman, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 65.



Jewish merchants, but were havens for African-Americans who were discriminated against in so many other areas of the city.<sup>79</sup>

The African-American community in Baltimore at this time also had a powerful force behind it: the press. The Baltimore *Afro-American* was founded in 1892 as a newspaper for the black community.<sup>80</sup> The first editor of the paper was Reverend William Alexander, who was the pastor of the Sharon Baptist Church on North Stricker Street in Sandtown-Winchester.<sup>81</sup> Over the years the newspaper covered stories pertinent to the black community that were often left out of *The Sun*, and advocated for a variety of causes, including an end to lynching, expanded job opportunities, decent housing, and inclusion on the city police force.<sup>82</sup> During the Great Depression, when 40 percent of black Baltimoreans were unemployed, the *Afro-American* urged readers to participate in the “Don’t Buy Where You Can’t Work” campaign that was happening in cities across the country in order to put pressure on white-owned business to hire African-Americans.<sup>83</sup> The paper supported the formation of a youth group to picket businesses on Pennsylvania Avenue in West Baltimore that refused to hire blacks in 1931.<sup>84</sup> They also advocated for improved housing. In 1935

---

<sup>79</sup> Elizabeth M. Nix and Deborah R. Weiner, “Pivot in Perception: The Impact of the 1968 Riots on Three Baltimore Business Districts,” in *Baltimore 68’: Riots and Rebirth in an American City*, eds. Jessica I. Elfenbein, Thomas L. Hollowak, and Elizabeth M. Nix, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011), 190.

<sup>80</sup> Hayward Farrar, *The Baltimore Afro-American*, (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1998), xii.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>82</sup> See Hayward Farrar, *The Baltimore Afro-American*, (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1998).

<sup>83</sup> Hayward Farrar, *The Baltimore Afro-American*, (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1998), 90.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

the paper accused the city of neglecting the African-American community by failing to acquire funding “for slum clearance and public housing” from the Public Works Administration.<sup>85</sup> Throughout its existence, the Afro-American has held the city accountable for paying attention to the needs of the black community.

During World War II, federal investments spurred industrial developments in Baltimore that mostly occurred on the periphery of the city. Industrial plants and federal housing were built in tidewater regions around Middle River and Curtis Bay, and military bases were built on coastal plain sites even further from the city.<sup>86</sup> The city’s major products contributed to the assembly of ships and airplanes. However critical the products, Baltimore was passed over as an important industrial site because the country’s war effort became focused on winning the war in the Pacific—and San Francisco Bay and other West Coast sites were both better protected from attacks by German U-Boats and could install all new infrastructure and production facilities. While Baltimore was considered for the site of a tin smelter, it lost the commission to Longhorn, Texas. Midwest and Pacific Coast locations became favored for federally-funded plants that created products such as light metals, aircraft engines, and synthetic rubber.<sup>87</sup>

---

<sup>85</sup> Hayward Farrar, *The Baltimore Afro-American*, (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1998), 105.

<sup>86</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 348.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 349.



Illustration 1.4. Sparrows Point Shipbuilding division of the Bethlehem Steel Company, steel mill featured in background, May 20, 1940. Photograph by Robert F. Kniesche for *The Baltimore Sun*.

After World War II, the city faced a housing crisis as veterans returned from war, and the city's population, particularly the black population continued to grow. African-Americans continued to be forced to reside in some of the oldest parts of the city because of housing discrimination. As reported by the *Baltimore Sun* in 1943, blacks had to live in the "Negro Archipelagoes" which at the time referred to the historically black communities including Sharp-Leadenhall in South Baltimore, East Baltimore beyond Old Town, and West Baltimore areas along Pennsylvania and Druid Hill Avenues. One-fifth of the population of the city was black in 1940, and yet the entire African-American population lived in only one-fiftieth of the land area.<sup>88</sup>

---

<sup>88</sup> Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 171.

There were two major responses to the overcrowding and poor housing conditions in black neighborhoods: blockbusting and blight removal. The origin of blockbusting in the city dates to 1910 when Margaret G. Franklin Brewer, a white woman, sold her house on McCullough Avenue to W. Ashbie Hawkins, an African-American man. The press decried this event, claiming that there was a “Negro invasion” happening in the city.<sup>89</sup> The process of blockbusting began with a speculative realtor selling one house in an all-white neighborhood to an African-American buyer. Following this transaction, the presence of black residents would create fear in the rest of the residents who were concerned that the neighborhood was in decline. Realtors fed on this fear, posting advertisements meant to incentivize white residents to sell. They would offer top prices to the first white sellers, and after the neighborhood turned over racially they were able to purchase the rest of the houses at much lower prices.<sup>90</sup> The eventual result was that the neighborhood would become completely black.

Between 1955 and 1965, Edmondson Village, a neighborhood west of Sandtown, experienced almost complete racial turnover.<sup>91</sup> The area had been developed by James Keelty who began building daylight rowhouses there during the

---

<sup>89</sup> Antero Pietila, *Not in My Neighborhood: How Bigotry Shaped a Great American City* (Chicago, Ivan R. Dee, 2010), 6.

<sup>90</sup> W. Edward Orser, “Flight to the Suburbs: Suburbanization and Racial Change on Baltimore’s West Side,” in *The Baltimore Book: New Views of Local History*, eds. Elizabeth Fee, Linda Shopes, and Linda Zeidman (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 221.

<sup>91</sup> W. Edward Orser, *Blockbusting in Baltimore: The Edmondson Village Story* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1994), ix.

1920s.<sup>92</sup> Daylight rowhouses have a window in nearly every room, making them brighter and more preferable than some of the older, darker rowhouses.<sup>93</sup> From the time of its earliest development through the late 1940s, Edmondson Village was an desirable white middle-class suburb. By the 1950s, however, suburban development had expanded outwards and the area became outdated. White flight accelerated during this time as the African-American population that had grown by twenty-five percent in the 1940s moved closer to the racial boundaries of neighborhoods across the city.<sup>94</sup>

The other response to the housing problems in black neighborhoods was urban renewal. The 1907 report *Housing Conditions of Baltimore* was the first published document to bring attention to the city's housing conditions. It claimed that four downtown neighborhoods were overcrowded and had high rates of disease.<sup>95</sup> In a 1934 canvas of city housing, officials identified a "ring of blight," which once again included some of the oldest housing stock in the city, all within a mile of the central business district (Figure 1.4). The people living in these rowhouses at the time were often lower-class immigrants and African-Americans from the South. The housing was frequently owned by absentee landlords who failed to maintain them.<sup>96</sup> In 1937,

---

<sup>92</sup> W. Edward Orser, *Blockbusting in Baltimore: The Edmondson Village Story* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1994), 49.

<sup>93</sup> Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 130.

<sup>94</sup> Orser, *Blockbusting in Baltimore*, 49.

<sup>95</sup> Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 170.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 171.

The Housing Authority of Baltimore City was founded with an \$18 million budget to address blight in the city.<sup>97</sup>

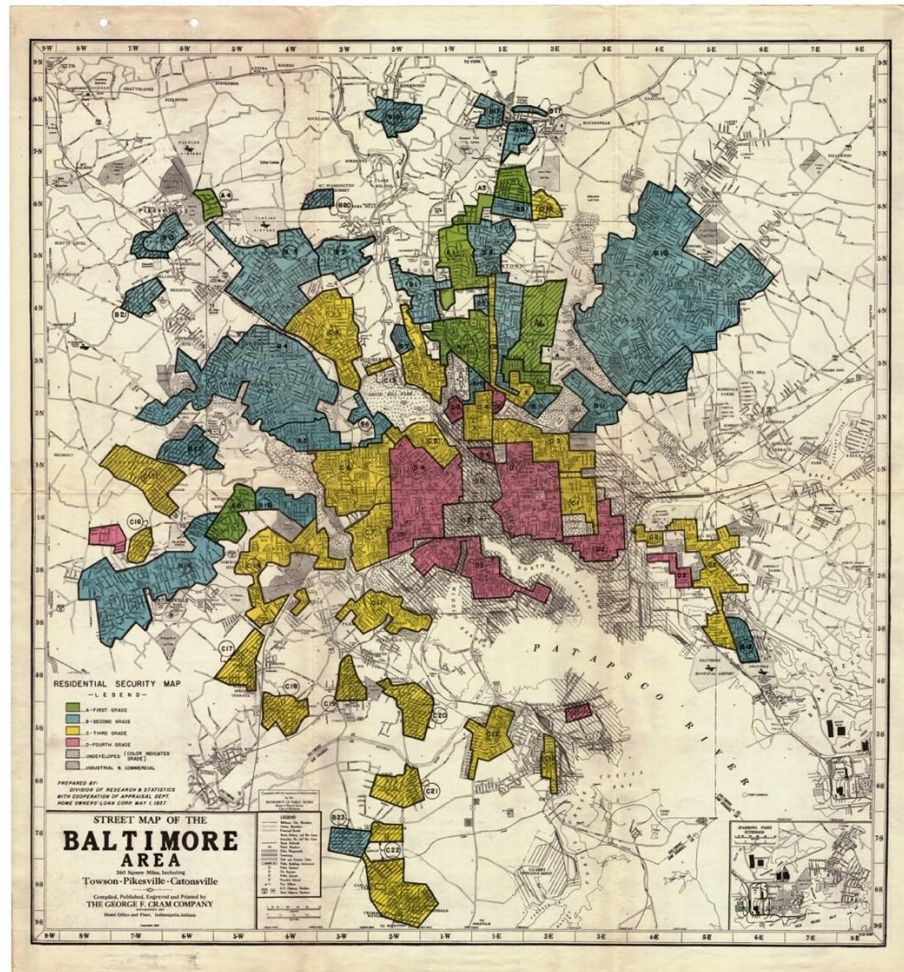


Figure 1.4. Home Owners Residential Security Map, 1937. From Sheridan Libraries Collections of Johns Hopkins University.

At that time, addressing blight meant the demolition of slums and the construction of public housing. In an area of the city west of downtown and a half mile north of the Mt. Clare railroad yards, the first public housing project was planned.

<sup>97</sup> Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 172.

Named the Poe Homes, the house that Edgar Allen Poe lived in was the only building not demolished. Although there was strong opposition to demolition by the residents who formed a coalition asking for their neighborhood to be “reconditioned not destroyed,” the city planners were not convinced.<sup>98</sup> They believed the deteriorating rowhouses were breeding crime and poverty. 226 rowhouses dating from the 1820s and 30s were destroyed as a result, and over 1,000 residents had to be relocated before the Poe Homes were completed.<sup>99</sup> The Poe Homes, composed of 298 apartment units, opened on September 30, 1940.<sup>100</sup>

A similar story played out in Sandtown-Winchester where hundreds of rowhouses along North Mount Street and Baker Street were slated for demolition. Originally described as a slum clearance project, the project only received approval once it was instead labeled a defense housing project.<sup>101</sup> The low-rise Gilmor Homes housing project took the place of hundreds of rowhouses. This project drew criticism not only from residents living in these houses, but also critics writing about the situation in the *Baltimore Evening Sun*. One reporter described how on the whole the neighborhood featured “good houses” that could be made habitable through

---

<sup>98</sup> Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 172.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> “Poe Homes come to life with rush,” *Baltimore Sun*, October 1, 1940.

<sup>101</sup> “Favors razing old homes for housing area,” *Baltimore Sun*, February 26, 1942.

renovation.<sup>102</sup> The 587-unit Gilmor Homes project opened in June 1942 exclusively for African-American families.<sup>103</sup>

Another component of urban renewal was highway construction. In 1944 Baltimore hired city planner Robert Moses who created a plan to build a sunken expressway through the Franklin-Mulberry corridor, the center of the west-side ‘slum.’<sup>104</sup> The plan was an east-west highway, known as the Franklin Expressway that would have travelled north of the central business district through the Mount Vernon neighborhood, and cut through both Franklin Mulberry and Old West Baltimore. The project, which lawyer and activist Herbert M. Brune at the time called “a mountain of human misery,” would have displaced 19,000 people, cost \$26 million dollars, and resulted in the demolition of 200 blocks.<sup>105</sup> Though these specific plans never came to fruition, a modified east-west highway, Interstate 170, was constructed between 1975 and 1979.<sup>106</sup> This 1.4 mile stretch of road, dubbed “the highway to nowhere,” resulted in the demolition of 20 rowhouses and churches in West Baltimore, and displaced nearly 3,000 predominately African-American residents.<sup>107</sup> This stretch of highway

---

<sup>102</sup> Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 173.

<sup>103</sup> “Gilmor Homes anniversary: Former residents join festivities,” *Baltimore Sun*, June 9, 1972.

<sup>104</sup> Pietila, *Not in my Neighborhood*, 219.

<sup>105</sup> Orser, *Blockbusting in Baltimore*, 56.

<sup>106</sup> James D. Dilts, “Franklin-Mulberry highways cost is double 1972 estimate,” *Baltimore Sun*, October 1, 1975.

<sup>107</sup> Fern Shen, “Highway to Nowhere Coming Down? Not Really,” *Baltimore Brew*, September 24, 2010, <https://baltimorebrew.com/2010/09/24/highway-to-nowhere-coming-down-not-really/>.



continues to divide West Baltimore neighborhoods from neighborhoods to the south including downtown.

These instances of blockbusting, white flight, highway construction, and urban renewal both reflected and created the rapidly changing city. In 1950 the city's population peaked at 949,708 people. Of these, over 700,000 were white. The African-American population grew from less than 220,000 to over 400,000 between 1950 and 1970. During this same period of time, over 200,000 whites left the city. The city lost eleven percent of its jobs between 1945 and 1968, but during the same time, Baltimore County, where many whites were moving in, saw job growth of 245 percent.<sup>108</sup>

On Friday April 5, 1968, the day following the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Baltimore became one of several cities across the country consumed with violent unrest. In black neighborhoods of East Baltimore, groups of residents began destroying businesses. A reflection of and result of the discrimination and displacement of black families of the most recent decades specifically, racial tensions reached a boiling point. The destruction of businesses was coupled with looting, and on Friday night the governor called for 5,500 National Guard troops to be brought in to support the police. On Saturday the destruction travelled to West Baltimore along Pennsylvania Avenue. By Monday six deaths were confirmed, 5,000 people had been arrested, and there were 1,200 fires. The majority of the businesses destroyed were white-owned, some of which had previously refused service to blacks, others that were

---

<sup>108</sup> Peter B. Levy, "The Dream Deferred: The Assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., and the Holy Week of Uprisings of 1968," in *Baltimore 68': Riots and Rebirth in an American City*, eds. Jessica I. Effenbein, Thomas L. Hollowak, Elizabeth M. Nix, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press), 14.

Jewish-owned.<sup>109</sup> Criminal activity, including looting, arson, and vandalism, occurred almost entirely in black neighborhoods, because state troopers had cordoned off downtown.<sup>110</sup> The uprising had a negative impact on several business districts that had already begun declining including Lombard Street and Pennsylvania Avenue.<sup>111</sup>



Illustration 1.5. National Guardsmen marching the 1900 block of Greenmount Avenue following riots over the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., April 7, 1968. Photograph by William L. LaForce Jr. for *The Baltimore Sun*.

---

<sup>109</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 383.

<sup>110</sup> Peter B. Levy, "The Dream Deferred: The Assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., and the Holy Week of Uprisings of 1968," in *Baltimore 68': Riots and Rebirth in an American City*, eds. Jessica I. Elfenbein, Thomas L. Hollowak, Elizabeth M. Nix, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press), 11.

<sup>111</sup> Elizabeth M Nix and Deborah R. Weiner, "Pivot in Perception: The Impact of the 1968 Riots on Three Baltimore Business Districts," in *Baltimore 68': Riots and Rebirth in an American City*, eds. Jessica I. Elfenbein, Thomas L. Hollowak, Elizabeth M. Nix, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press), 188.

### ***From the Inner Harbor to the Inner City***

During the 1970s and 80s, conditions in the inner-city neighborhoods of Baltimore, including Sandtown-Winchester, evidenced a history of generations of discrimination and neglect. The economy of the city changed as a result of deindustrialization, changing the nature of the employment. Revitalization efforts in the city began downtown and near the harbor not long after the riots ended. A reinvigorated downtown core emerged out of the revitalization efforts, but city neighborhoods farther away continued to suffer from disinvestment and deterioration.

Deindustrialization and corporate buyouts had a major effect on the city's economy. During the 1970s, Bethlehem Steel employed 30,000 workers at the city's plant. By 1986, fewer than 15,000 people worked for the company, and by 2009 only 2,500 remained.<sup>112</sup> When the American Can company merged with the National Can Company in 1987, the Baltimore factory that employed 2,000 people closed down.<sup>113</sup> On January 1, 1975, the Black & Decker plant shut down, laying off 3,700 people. Several other of the city's oldest plants closed during this decade including Mount Vernon Mills, the Mutual Chemical bichromate plant, and the Revere & American Smelting & Refining Company's smelting refineries.<sup>114</sup>

In 1970 the city planning office issued the *MetroCenter/Baltimore Technical Study*. The results of the report concluded that the city needed to undergo massive

---

<sup>112</sup> Fernandez-Kelly, *The Hero's Fight*, 5.

<sup>113</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 392.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 366.

urban renewal and redevelopment in order to maintain its tax base. The report also suggested that in order to attract private investment, it should clean up the waterfront and build a distinctive skyline of skyscrapers. In order to achieve these goals, the “ring of blight” still needed to be demolished, and the city needed new workers. Wallace, McHarg, Roberts, and Todd argued for the redevelopment of five key areas in the city’s core: the inner harbor, the neighborhood of St. Mary’s Seminary, the Camden Station area, Belair Market, and Lafayette Market. They wanted to separate residential and commercial areas, and correct block dimensions to make them more uniform.<sup>115</sup> The report was all about sanitizing a city seen as beleaguered by the riots, and emphasized downtown redevelopment.

Charles Center, a project whose origins precede the MetroCenter report, was the experiment that catalyzed a number of downtown redevelopment projects. The project, created to help stop the decline of the downtown commercial district, was conceived by the “Committee for Downtown” whose ranks soon included developer James W. Rouse. The project included the construction of the Sun Life building, the Morris A. Mechanic theatre (demolished 2015), One and Two Charles Center office, apartment buildings and other structures.<sup>116</sup>

A continuation of the goals and ideas set forth by Charles Center was the Inner Harbor Plan. First proposed in 1964, the project was phased over thirty years to redevelop 33-acres of abandoned warehouses, docks, and other maritime and

---

<sup>115</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 374.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 388.

industrial structures located along the harbor. While a few of these buildings were saved, the majority were demolished. The Inner Harbor plan idolized the idea of a *tabula rasa*, and sought to spur tourism and entertainment, two major growth industries. Some of its specific projects included Harborplace, the National Aquarium, a convention center, a science center, and a world trade center.<sup>117</sup>

The large downtown projects constitute most of the urban planning narrative of Baltimore's 1970s and 80s; however, smaller residential projects also had a major impact on the city. During Mayor Donald Schaeffer's term from 1971 to 1987, *Time Magazine* nicknamed Baltimore the "Renaissance City," in large part because of the Inner Harbor projects.<sup>118</sup> One of Schaeffer's less recognized initiatives however was the urban homesteading project. Modeled after the Homestead Acts that settled the American West, through the program abandoned houses were sold for one dollar each and purchasers received up to \$37,000 in low-interest construction loans. The program started in 1973 and was a way incentivize resettlement in older neighborhoods that were losing population, as well as a response to the end of federal funding for the construction of subsidized housing. The project provided fodder for the early preservation movement in the city, and saved 600 houses over the course of ten years. By the early 1980s federal budget constraints made it so the city could no longer subsidize construction loans, but a project called Rehab Express tried to keep the concept going for buyers who could afford to finance the projects themselves. After

---

<sup>117</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 389.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

the program ended, Baltimore advised New York and Washington D.C. on how to execute their own programs. The success of this project reinforced the downtown redevelopments, and stabilized the real estate market enough so that eventually the city no longer had to give away houses.<sup>119</sup>

As projects in the city's central core flourished, officials began to focus on addressing the most visible signs of failure in surrounding neighborhoods: public housing projects. In 1995, Baltimore demolished the six eleven-story high-rise towers of Lafayette Courts, a project that opened in 1955 in East Baltimore.<sup>120</sup> It, along with Lexington Terrace public housing project, were among the urban renewal projects that had replaced 'blighted' neighborhoods of 'dilapidated' rowhouses. Lafayette Courts, in turn, was replaced by new low-rise public housing that adopted Baltimore's traditional two-hundred-year-old building form. As planners and architects began to refocus on the activities of the city at the street level and design more at the human scale, what was old, traditional neighborhood development became new again in Baltimore.<sup>121</sup>

Not everyone believed that alterations to public housing and other neighborhood programs would be enough to stem the tide of decay in the city. In 1995, David Rusk, former mayor of Albuquerque, wrote the booklet *Baltimore*

---

<sup>119</sup> Michael deCourcy Hinds, "Baltimore's Story of City Homesteading," *New York Times*, January 16, 1986, <http://www.nytimes.com/1986/01/16/garden/baltimore-s-story-of-city-homesteading.html?pagewanted=all>.

<sup>120</sup> "New Housing Unit Nears Completion: Lafayette Courts to Open on Interracial Basis," *Baltimore Sun*, April 8, 1955.

<sup>121</sup> Hayward and Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*, 169.

*Unbound*, in which he claimed that Baltimore, along with 33 other American cities, was “beyond the point of no return,” and could not be redeemed.<sup>122</sup> The basis of his argument was that cities that could not annex their suburbs—which he called “inelastic cities” would not be able to financially sustain themselves.<sup>123</sup> Framing his narrative from the presumption that the city is “programmed for inexorable decline” because of the high proportion of poor African-Americans living there, he argued for the deconcentration of poverty through creating rental assistance and purchase programs to incentivize low-income residents to move to the suburbs.<sup>124</sup> He claimed that by adopting these policies, the poverty rate in the city would decrease by half, and there would be no high-poverty neighborhoods in the area.<sup>125</sup>

### ***Contemporary Baltimore***

The City of Baltimore is still trying to address complex urban problems born from the urban crisis era of the late 20th century. While the city lost one third of its population between 1960 and 2000, the city is losing population at a much slower rate in the 21st century.<sup>126</sup> As of 2015, the largest employers in the city were Johns Hopkins University and John Hopkins Hospital and Health systems, along with Under

---

<sup>122</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 398.

<sup>123</sup> David Rusk, *Baltimore Unbound*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 1.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, xiii, xvii.

<sup>125</sup> Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, 398.

<sup>126</sup> Natalie Sherman, “City population shrinks slightly in new estimates,” *Baltimore Sun*, March 26, 2015, <http://www.baltimoresun.com/business/bs-bz-census-20150326-story.html>.

Armour and the Cordish Company.<sup>127</sup> Recent data shows that Baltimore is not only a relatively affluent city, ranking seventh among the largest metropolitan areas in per capita income, but also has a significant black middle class.<sup>128</sup> The problem is that prosperity is not equally distributed across the metropolitan area, or even within the city itself. Nearly one quarter of Baltimore City residents live in poverty, and thirty-five percent of children live in poverty.<sup>129</sup> These problems have not stopped the city from having high aspirations, considering the 2000 Master Plan included a bid for the city to host the 2012 Olympic Games.<sup>130</sup>

The latest of Baltimore's redevelopment plans again focuses on the harbor, this time on Port Covington, an industrial area south of the Federal Hill neighborhood along the Inner Harbor. Under Armour Chief Executive Officer Kevin Plank plans to redevelop the area to include offices, restaurants, housing, shopping, waterfront parks, and a new headquarters for his company. Administered under Plank's real estate corporation Sagamore Development, Plank asked for \$1.1 billion in support from local, state, and federal governments, including \$535 million in tax-increment financing from the City of Baltimore. The project covers over 260 acres, and supporters believe it will create thousands of jobs for the city and revitalize another

---

<sup>127</sup> Baltimore Development Corporation and Maryland Department of Commerce, October 2015.

<sup>128</sup> Alan Berube and Brad McDearman, "Good fortune, dire poverty, and inequality in Baltimore: An American story," *Brookings Institute*, May 11, 2015, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2015/05/11/good-fortune-dire-poverty-and-inequality-in-baltimore-an-american-story/>.

<sup>129</sup> Jordan Malter, "Baltimore's economy in black and white," *CNN Money*, accessed October 13, 2016. <http://money.cnn.com/2015/04/29/news/economy/baltimore-economy/>.

<sup>130</sup> The Comprehensive Plan for Baltimore (draft), *Planning Commission, Department of Planning, City of Baltimore*, August 2000.



portion of the waterfront. Critics on the other hand argue that the city is not getting the best deal, and that the city's resources should be going to tackling larger problems in the neighborhoods, including failing schools and high crime.<sup>131</sup> On September 28, 2016, then Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake signed legislation that committed the city to using \$660 million worth of taxpayer-backed bonds to help pay for infrastructure improvement projects for Port Covington.<sup>132</sup>

Today, nearly 300 years after the founding of 'Baltimore Town' the City of Baltimore continues to do whatever it can to be more prominent at both the national and international level. Originally a colonial port town, it grew to become an industrial and manufacturing center. The city tends to operate like a Northern city but think like a Southern one, from the time of slavery to today when racism is still a powerful force in the city. A place defined by the residential architecture of rowhouses, Baltimore still uses the building form following the fall of modernist public housing towers that never found their place among a city so uniform in building style. Today the city struggles to find the balance between keeping up with urban revitalization schemes and tending to the needs of neighborhoods that have been disinvested in for nearly half a century.

---

<sup>131</sup> Adam Marton, Natalie Sherman, and Caroline Pate, "The Port Covington redevelopment examined," *Baltimore Sun*, accessed October 14, 2016, <http://data.baltimoresun.com/news/port-covington/>.

<sup>132</sup> Yvonne Wenger, "Rawlings-Blake signs off on Port Covington public financing," *Baltimore Sun*, September 28, 2016, <http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/maryland/baltimore-city/politics/bs-md-ci-port-covington-bill-signing-20160928-story.html>.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE CHALLENGES OF COMMUNITY PLANNING:

#### A REVIEW OF REVITALIZATION EFFORTS IN SANDTOWN-WINCHESTER

Revitalization efforts in Sandtown-Winchester were introduced as soon as the neighborhood began to decline in the 1970s. Over the years, these efforts have been initiated both internally by neighborhood organizations and externally by foundations and nonprofit organizations. While projects have included a range of different programs from youth leadership to job readiness, the primary focus was housing. By rehabilitating vacant properties and building new affordable housing, the leaders of these initiatives were convinced they could stabilize and improve the conditions of the whole neighborhood. During the 1990s in particular, Sandtown received so much press as an example of urban revitalization that former President Jimmy Carter came to the neighborhood to work on some of the first houses in the area to be completed by Habitat for Humanity. A cursory glance of Sandtown today does not reveal those investments. The neighborhood continues to face numerous complex and interrelated urban problems, some of which have a stronger correlation to the vacant and abandoned property issue than others. A close examination of how revitalization efforts have been implemented in the past provides context for the solutions to vacancy Baltimore is pursuing today.

This chapter discusses the history of revitalization efforts in the Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood in the Post-World War II era. It then evaluates the revitalization efforts and concludes by discussing the conditions of the neighborhood

today. The purpose of this chapter is to provide context for the current revitalization schemes affecting the neighborhood.

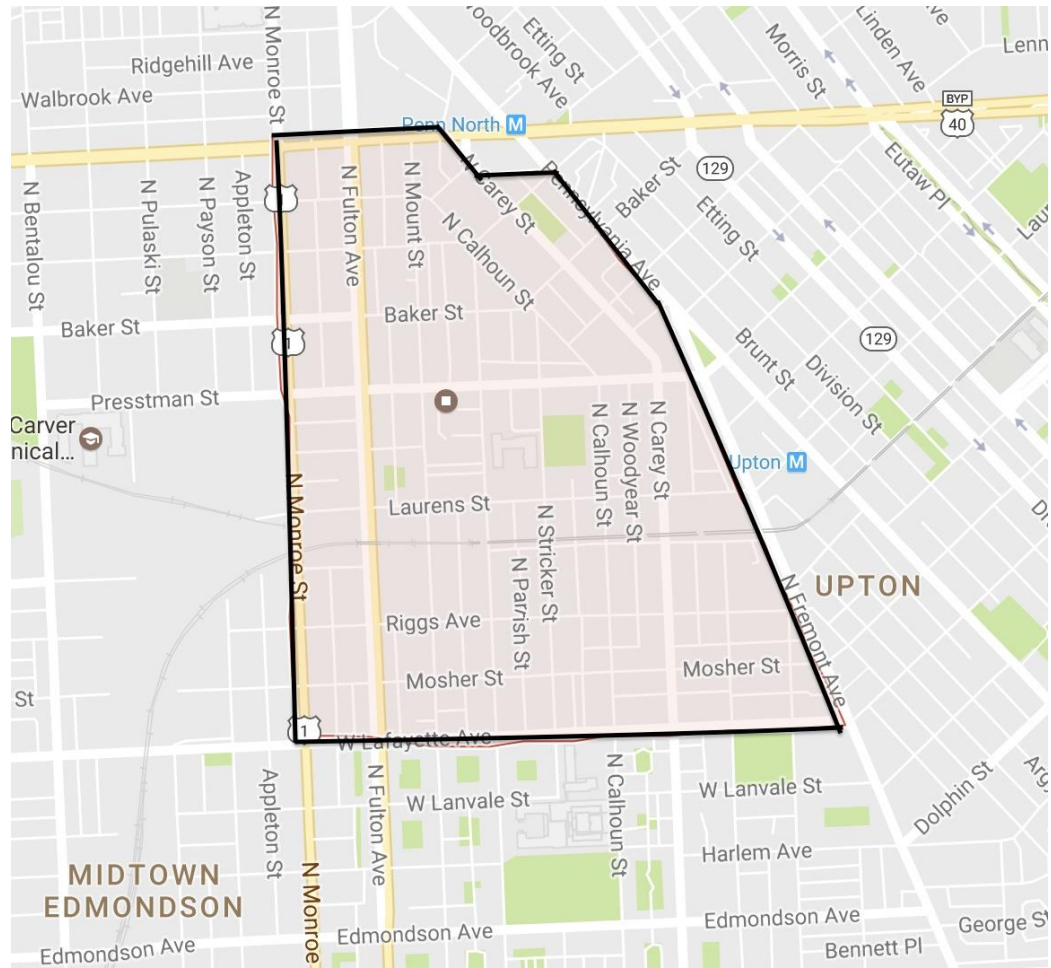


Figure 2.1. Map of the boundaries of the Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood. From Google Maps, 2011.

### *Revitalization Efforts in Sandtown-Winchester Post-World War II*

By the 1950s Sandtown was in the center of the thriving African-American community of the city. Sandtown was also at the edge of the color line, as African-Americans could not purchase property west of Fulton Avenue, the western boundary of the neighborhood. This changed in 1954 when the Banfields became the first black

family to cross the color line by purchasing 806 North Fulton Avenue on January 30, 1945. In nearby Edmondson Village, blockbusting began in 1955, and over the course of ten years the neighborhood became nearly exclusively African-American.<sup>1</sup> This migration of blacks within Baltimore was liberating in the sense that after a half-century of being forced to live in one area of the city they now had a choice. Subsequently though, the unified black communities of the early 20th century began to disintegrate as African-Americans dispersed to other city neighborhoods and suburban communities.

Economic forces had a significant impact on Baltimore during the 1960s. The city's population peaked in 1950 at 949,708, and by 1960 Baltimore had lost 10,000 people.<sup>2</sup> One of the many reasons the suburbs had such a powerful pull on city residents was that thousands of jobs moved there. Between 1955 and 1965 the city lost 82 industries, 65 of which moved to Baltimore County.<sup>3</sup> Between 1970 and 1980 the population of Baltimore saw its greatest decrease, losing 152,249 people.<sup>4</sup>

The 1970s was a difficult decade for the city, and particularly for Sandtown. The 1970 census revealed that the neighborhood had a median income below the federal poverty level.<sup>5</sup> As jobs left the city, the illegal drug economy flourished in

---

<sup>1</sup> Orser, *Blockbusting in Baltimore*, 84.

<sup>2</sup> "U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1790-1990," *Maryland State Archives*, accessed December 11, 2016, <https://baltimorecityhistory.files.wordpress.com/2011/08/pop1.jpg>.

<sup>3</sup> Antero Pietila, *Not In My Neighborhood: How Bigotry Shaped A Great American City*, (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee Publishers, 2010), 221.

<sup>4</sup> "U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1790-1990," *Maryland State Archives*, accessed December 11, 2016, <https://baltimorecityhistory.files.wordpress.com/2011/08/pop1.jpg>.

<sup>5</sup> Eileen Canzian, "Co-op to bring more housing to Sandtown," *Baltimore Sun*, June 27, 1982.

neighborhoods like Sandtown. The influx of drugs increased the amount of crime and violence in the neighborhood, and led to more people being incarcerated.<sup>6</sup>

In 1977 the Sandtown-Winchester Improvement Association was organized to address some of the problems the neighborhood faced. It was estimated that at the time the neighborhood had approximately 500 vacant properties. One of the Association's first activities was to lobby for urban renewal funds in order to work on rehabilitation projects in the neighborhood. During this period, urban renewal funds were not only being put towards clearance and new construction, they were also being put towards rehabilitation projects. In 1978 the Association obtained urban renewal status for the 900 block of Fulton Avenue in order to receive funding to rehabilitate existing properties. The organization chose this area because it had one of highest rates of homeownership in the area, and also because they thought the high visibility of these properties would signal that revitalization was underway in the neighborhood.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> Marc V. Levine, "The failure of economic development in Baltimore—and Milwaukee," *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, May 22, 2015.

<sup>7</sup> Letter from the Sandtown-Winchester Improvement Association to City Council members, BRG48-31-3-4, Department of Housing and Community Development Planning 1956-1988 Box 8, Folder October-November 1978, Baltimore City Archives, Baltimore, Maryland.

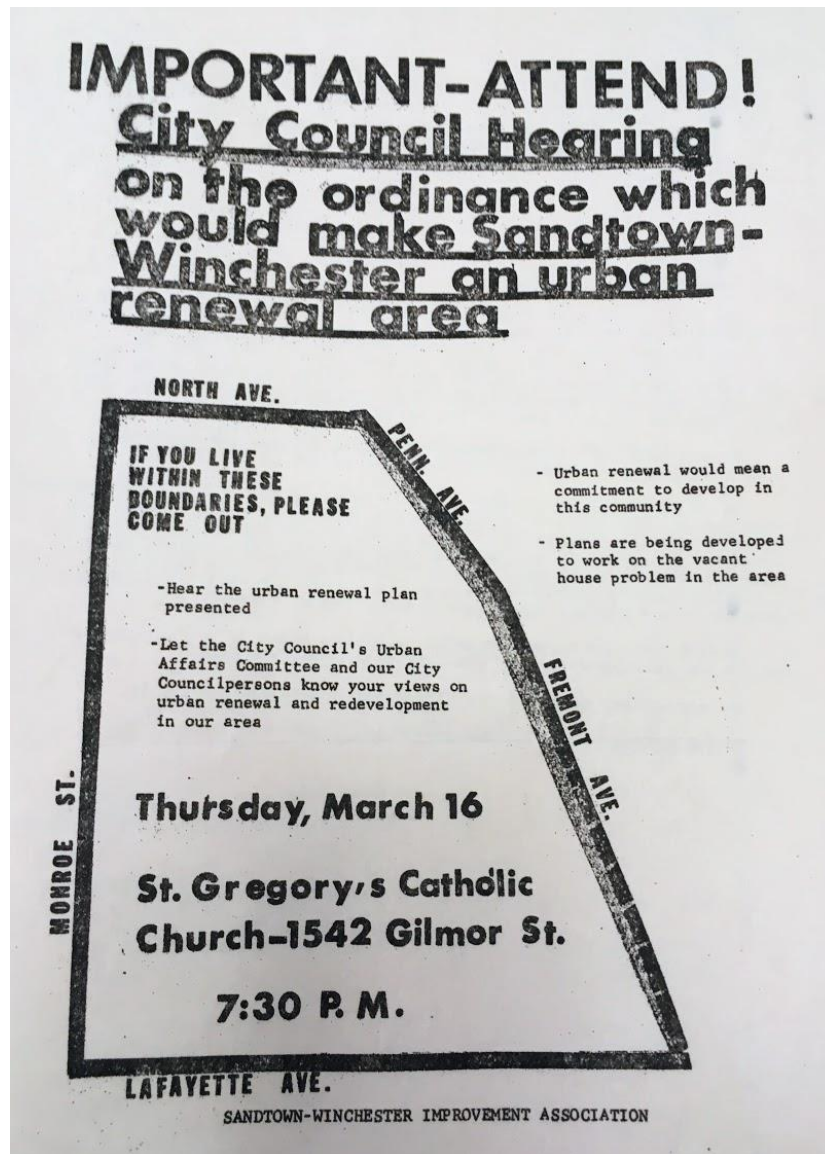


Figure 2.2. Flyer from the Sandtown-Winchester Improvement Association, 1978. From the Baltimore City Archives.

Another one of the early initiatives the Improvement Association pushed for was a housing cooperative for low-income buyers. In 1982 the Sandtown Village Cooperative opened as a result of receiving the desired urban renewal funds for the 900 block of North Fulton Avenue. The city's fourth subsidized housing co-op, it allowed people who purchased the houses to become the collective owners of the

housing complex, which consisted of rehabilitated rowhouses. This project provided affordable housing to neighborhood residents, and by making the owners their own landlords, ensured that they would not be evicted or have their rents increased. Ella Johnson, a housing specialist for the Improvement Association, noted that this co-op would help make it so that people have more of a stake in what happens in their neighborhood than they would if they were just renters. The co-op consisted of forty-one units divided into apartments of one to four bedrooms, creating places suitable for families of different sizes. The project was paid for by a city subsidy which made it possible for residents to buy into the co-op for \$500 down, and make monthly payments of between \$250 and \$375.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> Eileen Canzian, "Co-op to bring more housing to Sandtown," *Baltimore Sun*, June 27, 1982.

**SANDTOWN WINCHESTER  
CONDOMINIUMS**  
900 BLOCK FULTON AVE.



**COMPLETELY RENOVATED**  
**2 and 3 BEDROOM CONDOMINIUMS**

ESTIMATED MONTHLY PAYMENTS

2 BEDROOM UNITS	3 BEDROOM UNITS
<b>\$290.00</b>	<b>\$400.00</b>
<b>\$500.00 DOWN</b>	<b>\$750.00 DOWN</b>

**9%** INITIAL INTEREST RATES

**BUYER PAYS NO CLOSING COSTS**

Includes Taxes, Insurance, and Homeowners Association fee.  
Typical example of Graduated CDA Financing: 9% interest rate during the first year of the loan, 11.2% fixed interest after the first five years of the loan, the interest will stay at 11.2% for the remainder of the mortgage.

**OPEN HOUSE**  
906 N. FULTON AVE.  
SATURDAY & SUNDAY  
DECEMBER 9, 1984  
1-5 p.m.

- ★ Modern kitchen & Bath
- ★ Wall to wall carpeting
- ★ On site parking
- ★ Balconies & Patios
- ★ Air Conditioning
- ★ and much more.

Directions: From West Baltimore, take Mulberry Street (Route 40) East to the 1800 block. Turn left onto N. Fulton Avenue.  
From East Baltimore, take Franklin Street (Route 40) West to the 1700 block. Turn right onto N. Fulton Avenue.

PHONE:  
SALES OFFICE OPEN  
MON-FRI 1-6 SAT & SUN 10-2  
906 NORTH FULTON AVE

OR  
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT  
SANDTOWN WINCHESTER IMPROVEMENT  
ASSOCIATION  
462-1933  
SALES OFFICE 669-0792



Figure 2.3. Advertisement for cooperative housing on the 900 block of Fulton Avenue. From *The Baltimore Sun*, December 9, 1984.

Revitalization efforts in the neighborhood were directed by community members up until the late 1980s. Between 1987 and 1989 and the nonprofit organization Baltimore United in Leadership Development (BUILD) formed a



collaboration with the city's new mayor to address problems in Sandtown. Kurt Schmoke became the city's first African-American mayor in 1987. He ran on a platform of drug decriminalization, improving housing and education programs, and focusing on boosting the city's economy.<sup>9</sup> BUILD, a coalition of religious congregations, public schools, and other associations that united with the goal of revitalizing inner-city neighborhoods, was founded in 1977.<sup>10</sup> The early initiatives of BUILD included improving police protections, improving housing, and deterring arsonists.<sup>11</sup> During his mayoral campaign, Schmoke had promised to help BUILD construct affordable housing in Baltimore's poorest neighborhoods.<sup>12</sup>

One of the first initiatives made possible from the partnership between BUILD and Schmoke was a \$17 million "city renewal" plan announced in 1989. Funded in collaboration with city and state governments, the project included building 250 new houses in Sandtown for low-income families on Winchester Street between Gilmore and Carey Streets.<sup>13</sup> The new houses were detached brick rowhouses that were in keeping with the existing architectural form and materials of the neighborhood.

---

<sup>9</sup> "What Can ED Learn from Baltimore's Sandtown" *Journal of Applied Research in Economic Development* 12, (2015): 1-25, <http://journal.c2er.org/2015/09/what-can-ed-learn-from-baltimores-sandtown/>.

<sup>10</sup> Edward Gunts, "Home Sweet First Home," *Baltimore Sun*, July 21, 1991.

<sup>11</sup> "Build Victories and history," *Baltimoreans United in Leadership Development*, accessed December 11, 2016, <http://www.builtiaf.org/victories-history/>.

<sup>12</sup> Joshua Olsen, *Better Places, Better Lives: A Biography of James Rouse*, (Washington D.C.: The Urban Land Institute, 2003), 351.

<sup>13</sup> Eileen Canzian, "\$17 million city renewal project unveiled: Community targeted in West Baltimore," *Baltimore Sun*, March 3, 1989.

In 1988, less than a year after Schmoke became mayor, real estate developer James Rouse, approached Schmoke with an ambitious vision of neighborhood revitalization for Baltimore.<sup>14</sup> Rouse, a Maryland native, had become well-known for developing festival marketplaces—shopping centers in central cities designed to help revitalize downtowns. He was responsible for Faneuil Hall in Boston, Santa Monica Place, and had recently worked on Harborplace in Baltimore. Towards the end of his life, Rouse became focused on a new, socially conscious mission of creating a model to revitalize inner-city neighborhoods; a goal which led him to establish the Enterprise Foundation (now Enterprise Community Partners) in 1981.<sup>15</sup> The purpose of the Enterprise Foundation was to create low-income housing through community organizations.<sup>16</sup> In 1992 the Enterprise Foundation launched the Community Building in Partnership Initiative to transform neighborhoods in 150 cities.<sup>17</sup> Rouse brought to Schmoke the idea of launching a concentrated long-term effort to completely remake one of the most distressed neighborhoods in the city. Initially hesitant to this idea, Schmoke chose to first collaborate with the Enterprise Foundation on a smaller project, a collaboration with BUILD to construct 300 new housing units in West Baltimore.<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> Olsen, *Better Places, Better Lives: A Biography of James Rouse*, 351.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 300.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 298.

<sup>17</sup> George F. Will, “Bright Replaces Blight in Baltimore,” *Buffalo News*, January 3, 1996.

<sup>18</sup> Olsen, *Better Places, Better Lives: A Biography of James Rouse*, 351.

These new housing projects became known as Nehemiah Homes, named after the funding that created them: the Nehemiah Housing Opportunities Grant Program created by Congress in 1987 through the Housing and Community Development Act.<sup>19</sup> Administered through the Federal Housing Administration, the Nehemiah Program was a loan assistance program for low-income homebuyers. This program offered down payment assistance to anyone who qualified for an FHA loan. The goals of the program were to increase homeownership in low and moderate income neighborhoods, improve neighborhoods in cities across the country, and increase employment in those neighborhoods.<sup>20</sup>

The first Nehemiah project constructed in West Baltimore was in the Penn North neighborhood north of Sandtown in March 1990. Here 73 new rowhouses were constructed for low-income families. Financing was made possible from both the federal grant, as well as special local funding. The houses were sold to families with annual incomes between \$13,000 and \$30,000, whose average monthly payment for the house was approximately \$350. In June of the same year, the project expanded to the Sandtown neighborhood, where construction began on 210 new rowhouses, and the renovation of 17 existing.<sup>21</sup>

In the midst of planning for the Nehemiah Homes, Schmoke came around to Rouse's grand neighborhood revitalization plan. One of the reasons Sandtown became

---

<sup>19</sup> *Housing and Community Development Act of 1987*, Pub. L. No. 100-242, 101 Stat. 1815.

<sup>20</sup> "Evaluation of the Nehemiah Housing Opportunity Program," *Office of Policy Development and Research, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development*, <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/publications/affhsg/evalnehemiahhousing.html>.

<sup>21</sup> Nancy Pick, "Nehemiah project rising from wrecker's dust," *Baltimore Sun*, March 14, 1990.

the focal neighborhood is that following a 1989 new conference during which the mayor had announced the Nehemiah project, Sandtown residents told him that without curbing crime, improving schools, cleaning up the streets, and providing better healthcare, new housing would not make a difference.<sup>22</sup> Between 1989 and 1990, Schmoke and Rouse, along with BUILD, worked to define their vision for Sandtown in collaboration with the community. In May 1990 over four hundred people showed up to a neighborhood meeting where Schmoke and others discussed potential projects. Over the next year community groups in Sandtown met continually, sometimes twice a week working on ideas and plans for their neighborhood.<sup>23</sup>

The product of these meetings was a series of lofty goals for the transformation of Sandtown. Instead of only focusing on addressing a few neighborhood problems, Community Building in Partnership, the organization formed to carry out revitalization efforts, decided to tackle them all. This decision was motivated by Rouse, who, in 1996, vowed that “all the social and physical conditions in this neighborhood will be transformed over the next five years.”<sup>24</sup> He believed that true neighborhood transformation could only be possible by addressing all of the problems comprehensively rather than piecemeal, a theory premised on the idea that poverty is an interconnected web.<sup>25</sup> Thus, the initiatives in Sandtown would try to address as many of the root causes of neighborhood decline as possible.

---

<sup>22</sup> Robert A. Rankin, “Helping Residents Rebuild a Blighted Community: “Step by step, block by block, all the housing is to be made decent,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 24, 1992.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> George F. Will, “Bright Replaces Blight in Baltimore,” *Buffalo News*, January 3, 1996.

In 1990 the Sandtown-Winchester Task Force was appointed to guide the planning process and included community members, BUILD, Baltimore Urban League, and the Enterprise Foundation. This task force was asked to create a neighborhood charter that would reflect what residents wanted to see happen. The group developed a ten-point vision statement for the neighborhood and organized committees to create strategies for bringing their vision to fruition. Some of the issues included access to healthcare, access to employment opportunities, improving schools, and addressing substance abuse.<sup>26</sup>

The primary goal of the CBP, however, was to create more affordable housing in the neighborhood though through both the rehabilitation of existing row houses, as well as the construction of new buildings. Some building projects were already underway in the neighborhood when CBP was created. These included the renovation of 589 units in the Gilmor Homes public housing project, and the construction of the aforementioned Nehemiah Homes.

Funding for the revitalization projects came from a number of different sources, both private and public. At the federal level funding from the Nehemiah program was provided to go towards housing initiatives.<sup>27</sup> It is estimated that the Enterprise Foundation earmarked at least \$30 million.<sup>28</sup> The various congregations that comprised BUILD donated \$100,000 to jump start housing projects.

---

<sup>26</sup> Edward Gunts, "Home Sweet First Home," *Baltimore Sun*, July 21, 1991.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Yvonne Wenger, "Saving Sandtown-Winchester: decade-long, multimillion-dollar investment questioned," *Baltimore Sun*, May 10, 2015.

At the same time that these things were going on, Sandtown's Habitat for Humanity was also working on a number of projects in the neighborhood. Habitat for Humanity is a nonprofit organization founded in 1976, that works across the country and the world to create decent and affordable housing.<sup>29</sup> The Sandtown chapter of Habitat for Humanity was created in 1989 by New Song Church to combat housing inequalities.<sup>30</sup> The organization's first project in the neighborhood was the rehabilitation of 1621 North Gilmor Street. The group bought the house for \$5,000 from a private partnership in Washington D.C. Mayor Schموke attended the open house for the newly renovated structure on March 4, 1990.<sup>31</sup>

In June 1992, former President Jimmy Carter and Rosalynn Carter volunteered with Sandtown Habitat to rehabilitate ten vacant houses in Sandtown.<sup>32</sup> The Carters were part of Habitat's commitment to renovate one hundred houses in the neighborhood, a goal that was eventually achieved in 1998.<sup>33</sup> Houses rehabilitated by Sandtown are easily identifiable because each has a front facade painted a different pastel color. By the end of 2011, Sandtown Habitat had rehabilitated its 300th home in

---

<sup>29</sup> "Habitat's History," *Habitat for Humanity*, accessed April 17, 2017, <https://www.habitat.org/about/history>.

<sup>30</sup> Timothy B. Wheeler, "Habitat group rehabs 300th home in Sandtown," *Baltimore Sun*, December 11, 2011.

<sup>31</sup> Leslie Williams, "Home is where the hard work is," *Baltimore Sun*, March 5, 1990.

<sup>32</sup> James Bock and Joan Jacobson, "Carters to help rehab West Baltimore's Sandtown Habitat program to rebuild homes," *Baltimore Sun*, March 28, 1992.

<sup>33</sup> Stephanie DeLuca and Peter Rosenblatt, "Sandtown-Winchester—Baltimore's daring experiment in urban renewal: 20 years later, what are lessons learned?" *The Abell Report* 26, no. 8 (2013): 1.

the neighborhood.<sup>34</sup> In 2014 Sandtown Habitat merged with Habitat for Humanity of the Chesapeake.<sup>35</sup> The Chesapeake branch of the organization has been working across Baltimore City and County since 1982, beginning by rehabilitating vacant rowhouses.<sup>36</sup>



Illustration 2.1. Habitat for Humanity rehabilitated rowhouses. Photograph by author, November 17, 2016.

---

<sup>34</sup> Timothy B. Wheeler, “Habitat group rehabs 300th home in Sandtown,” *Baltimore Sun*, December 11, 2011.

<sup>35</sup> “Featured Project, Sandtown-Winchester,” *Habitat for Humanity of the Chesapeake*, accessed January 4, 2016, <http://habitat Chesapeake.org/what-we-build/where-we-work/featured-project>.

<sup>36</sup> “Fact Sheet: Habitat for Humanity of the Chesapeake, Habitat for Humanity of the Chesapeake, accessed January 8, 2017, <https://habitat Chesapeake.org/file/16/HabitatMergerMediaKit.pdf>.

### ***Dissatisfaction and Disintegration***

Despite all of the investment and programs that had been introduced in the neighborhood, many residents did not think CBP's work was successful. Over 400 Sandtown residents attended a community meeting in June 1998, many of whom came to express their frustrations with the way that revitalization efforts were proceeding. Several residents expressed the feeling that they were not being adequately involved in the efforts. Since the majority of the funding went into building projects, residents felt that other issues like the rampant drug trade, drug abuse, and inadequate trash pickup, were being ignored.<sup>37</sup> Residents explained that they felt as though the issues that mattered the most to them were not the priority of Rouse and other leaders.

In response to these complaints, Community Building in Partnership reinvigorated their grassroots outreach by sending AmeriCorps volunteers out across the neighborhood to discuss public safety issues, one of the concerns residents felt were not being adequately addressed. They also started a program to bring in facilitators who would be able to train people who have already been singled out as community leaders.<sup>38</sup> Addressing these discontents at this point in the process would prove to not be enough to sustain the revitalization efforts going forward. During Martin O'Malley's tenure as mayor in the 2000s, his administration addressed the city's crime and drug trade with zero tolerance policing policies.<sup>39</sup> The revitalization

---

<sup>37</sup> Barry Yeoman, "Left Behind in Sandtown," *City Limits*, January 1, 1998, <http://barryyeoman.com/1998/01/left-behind-in-sandtown-baltimore/>.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> John Fritze, "Report puts O'Malley on defense over policing," *Baltimore Sun*, August 11, 2016.



of Sandtown was not the central priority at City Hall anymore, and even if it had been, the money was no longer there to support it. By the mid-2000s, CBP had disbanded. All in all, it is estimated that somewhere between \$130 to \$180 million were put into the neighborhood over the course of about a decade.<sup>40</sup> Whether the money promised was actually put towards revitalization efforts in the neighborhood remains a point of contention for residents.

### ***Evaluation of Revitalization Efforts***

There are several quantitative measures that suggest that Community Building in Partnership's initiatives did make a difference in the neighborhood. Between 1990 and 2009, the number of neighborhood residents living below the poverty line fell by 8.3 percent. The owner-occupancy rate increased from 24.3 percent in 1990 to 35.6 percent in 2009. Educational levels in the neighborhood also improved, as shown by the fact that 18.9 percent more people had a high school diploma in 2009 than in 1990. However, despite all of these positive changes, the neighborhood lost over 2,800 residents, and unemployment increased by 3.4 percent.<sup>41</sup> It should also be noted that the positive changes could have also been the result of outmigration from the neighborhood.

---

<sup>40</sup> "What Can ED Learn from Baltimore's Sandtown," *Journal of Applied Research in Economic Development* 12, September 2015, <http://journal.c2er.org/2015/09/what-can-ed-learn-from-baltimores-sandtown/>.

<sup>41</sup> DeLuca and Rosenblatt, "Sandtown-Winchester—Baltimore's daring experiment in urban renewal: 20 years later, what are lessons learned?", 3.

Some critics look at the state of the neighborhood today and write off the revitalization efforts as a failure. Paul Marx, one of Rouse's biographers, called Rouse overly optimistic, and said of Sandtown that perhaps "some areas are too lost to be helped much."<sup>42</sup> This opinion became more widely accepted following the death of Freddie Gray, when policy analysts and journalists alike reexamined the revitalization efforts that took place in an attempt to explain the events of April 12. In 2015 Joan Walsh claimed that the revitalization efforts of the 1990s were meant to prevent the events that began with Gray's arrest, suggesting a correlation between the failure of revitalization efforts and Gray's treatment by police.

In examining the results of the revitalization projects, it is important to note the lack of accounting that was carried out to detail exactly where and how the money that was promised was actually spent. In a report for the Abell Foundation in 2013 Stefanie DeLuca and Peter Rosenblatt scoured a variety of sources for information on where the money was invested in the neighborhood and what it produced, but found very little. Records do indicate that \$100,000,000 was allocated for housing alone, and that the Enterprise Foundation invested \$30,000,000, though what for, is unclear. While there is evidence that midway through the project millions of dollars were put towards building repairs in Sandtown and other neighborhoods, many such repairs were either faulty or never fully completed.<sup>43</sup> Considering this lapse in reported accounting, any assessment of the success or failure of the project should not assume that the estimated

---

<sup>42</sup> Paul Marx, "Rouse's failure in Sandtown-Winchester," *Baltimore Sun*, March 13, 2015.

<sup>43</sup> Yvonne Wenger, "Saving Sandtown-Winchester: decade-long, multimillion-dollar investment questioned," *Baltimore Sun*, May 10, 2015.

\$130 to \$180 million that was earmarked for the project was spent, or was spent on what was promised.

One of the major critiques of how the project was executed was that it was top down—that the project was driven solely by an ambitious mayor and a wealthy developer. In spite of all of the community meetings and the employment of hundreds of residents as block captains and outreach workers, some residents still did not feel that they had ownership over the projects, or that their voices were being heard in what they wanted to see happen in their neighborhood.<sup>44</sup> Early on in the process BUILD was a major partner in the project, and they emphasized that neighborhood transformation could only occur if residents were taught leadership and political organizing skills. BUILD believed that this was the most important thing to invest money in. When the Enterprise Foundation came on the scene, their leaders recognized the importance of teaching residents those skills, but were convinced that housing was more important and would be the focus of their efforts. One of the reasons for this is that improved housing is a visible symbol of neighborhood improvement, whereas empowered neighborhood leaders are not. Many remarked that the CBP failed to create capacity in the community, leading to a sense of distrust between residents and organizers.<sup>45</sup>

---

<sup>44</sup> Joan Walsh, “Baltimore’s shame is America’s shame: how job flight and police brutality spelled doom for Freddie Gray’s neighborhood,” *Salon*, April 28, 2015, [http://www.salon.com/2015/04/28/freddie\\_gray%E2%80%99s\\_neighborhood\\_why\\_sandtown\\_winches\\_ter\\_remains\\_hopeless/](http://www.salon.com/2015/04/28/freddie_gray%E2%80%99s_neighborhood_why_sandtown_winches_ter_remains_hopeless/).

<sup>45</sup> Yeoman, “Left Behind in Sandtown.”

As a result, leaders of the initiatives in Sandtown thought that the community structures were weak, so they implemented their own intermediate organizations to effect change. They too failed to build capacity in the existing leaders and organizations of the neighborhood. Instead of viewing community capacity as a key result they wanted to see come out of their efforts, CBP took a course that they thought would get faster results for their other goals.<sup>46</sup> This strategy was one of many decisions that ended up limiting the long-term impact of the programs.

While leaders of the project initially committed to using a holistic approach to solve more than one of the neighborhood's problems simultaneously, some critics claim that the majority of the project was focused on housing. It was noted that only after the housing was completed would residents approach Rouse and in one way or another remark "This house is very nice but I have no job."<sup>47</sup> However, one of the reasons that housing did become the predominant focus of the project was that there was funding to support it both at the federal and state level. While this happened, other promises such as new parks and open space, a recreation center, not to mention issues such as crime and job training, fell further down the list of priorities.<sup>48</sup>

There were a number of problems with the premises of Community Building in Partnership's strategies. One of CBP's strategies was to stem population loss in the

---

<sup>46</sup> Prudence Brown, Benjamin Butler, and Ralph Hamilton, "The Sandtown Winchester Neighborhood Transformation Initiative: Lessons Learned About Community Building and Implementation," *The Enterprise Foundation*, 22, 2001, [https://www.chapinhall.org/sites/default/files/old\\_reports/104.pdf](https://www.chapinhall.org/sites/default/files/old_reports/104.pdf).

<sup>47</sup> Yeoman, "Left Behind in Sandtown."

<sup>48</sup> Jennifer L. Coates, "Rouse's Sandtown-Winchester effort was a success," *Baltimore Sun*, June 11, 2015.

neighborhood by creating affordable housing. By failing to either accept or address the problem of lack of well-paying jobs for working class residents, though, CBP actually created an excess of affordable housing that remained out of reach for many underemployed and unemployed individuals. Leaders of these initiatives continued to create affordable housing even as the neighborhood lost population. By ignoring demographic statistics, the CBP inadvertently started creating more vacant properties instead of eliminating them.

Despite their efforts, CBP was also unable to help residents get a good enough paying job to be able to afford the housing they were creating. In the 1990s eighteen percent of Sandtown residents were unemployed.<sup>49</sup> The CBP was able make some difference in this area, through a training program called Jobs-Plus.<sup>50</sup> In addition to that, over three hundred people were able to secure jobs through a program called Sandtown Works.<sup>51</sup> In spite of the progress made in this area in 1990s, by 2009 the unemployment rate had increased to twenty-one percent.<sup>52</sup> If creating good paying jobs in and around the neighborhood had been their first priority, however, they might have been able to retain more residents, who would then be able to afford to purchase the new housing units.

When CBP closed, the neighborhood lost more than an organizing committee. As described by Doni Glover, a local radio host who grew up in the neighborhood,

---

<sup>49</sup> Wenger, "Saving Sandtown: decade long, multimillion-dollar investment questioned."

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Yeoman, "Left Behind in Sandtown."

<sup>52</sup> Wenger, "Saving Sandtown: decade long, multimillion-dollar investment questioned."

When the Sandtown-Winchester Transformation Project, known as Community Building in Partnership Inc., finally closed down, this community — of which I call home — began to lose all of the very resources that were changing things around for many people. Not only did we lose CBP, we lost our community newspaper, a senior center, an AmeriCorps Program, a job placement office, a high blood pressure program sponsored by Johns Hopkins well as a couple community development corporations. We also lost a program that addressed vacant properties. All of these programs are gone with the wind.<sup>53</sup>

The closing of CBP had far reaching consequences for a host of other programs that were helping people in the neighborhood. Losing all of these programs within such a short timeframe undoubtedly negatively impacted the lives of residents who used them.

Another major critique of the project is that it was too ambitious. Rouse, who was accustomed to tackling large projects as a real estate developer, failed to gauge the size of the project he was taking on in Sandtown. Rouse had initially considered working in another neighborhood in East Baltimore close to Johns Hopkins University. Governor Schaefer advised Rouse to choose that area because he thought that Sandtown had suffered from too much decline to rebound. By contrast, Rouse was convinced that in order to have the greatest impact he would have to work in a struggling area like Sandtown. In a letter to one of his advisers he explained that “For the demonstration to have meaning—to prove that there are important answers—it must involve a neighborhood that is really bad, tough to change.”<sup>54</sup> The transformation

---

<sup>53</sup> Joan Walsh, “Baltimore’s shame is America’s shame: how job flight and police brutality spelled doom for Freddie Gray’s neighborhood,” *Salon*, April 28, 2015, [http://www.salon.com/2015/04/28/freddie\\_gray%E2%80%99s\\_neighborhood\\_why\\_sandtown\\_winchester\\_remains\\_hopeless/](http://www.salon.com/2015/04/28/freddie_gray%E2%80%99s_neighborhood_why_sandtown_winchester_remains_hopeless/).

<sup>54</sup> Olsen, *Better Places, Better Lives: A Biography of James Rouse*, 353.

of Sandtown-Winchester was meant to be the showpiece of his career, his chance to prove that it was possible with the right organizations and right methods to completely rejuvenate one of the poorest neighborhoods in the city.

Though Rouse and Schmoke both had good intentions in pursuing these efforts, for both of them the project became a way for each to strengthen their respective careers. For Schmoke, who had his sights set on Sandtown even before he got elected, the project was meant to show that he could, after years of neglect by white mayors of West Baltimore, become the first black mayor and prove how committed he was to inner city neighborhoods. Rouse was attempting to finish his career with a signature socially-conscious project that would add diversify his portfolio of projects. The fact that both of these men had a stake in the outcome of the projects could have been contributing factors to why they tried to rush things along in order to try and achieve the results they wanted as quickly as possible. Turning Sandtown into a tool for gaining personal success, however, did not result in real changes for the people who lived in the neighborhood.<sup>55</sup> Rouse was incredibly involved in conversations with the community, but often found himself growing impatient with the pace of the process. His tendency to rush everyone along actually ended up stalling planning process.<sup>56</sup> Ultimately, Rouse and Schmoke let the image of the project become more important than the results.

---

<sup>55</sup> Barry Yeoman, "Left Behind in Sandtown," *City Limits*, January 1, 1998.

<sup>56</sup> Olsen, *Better Places, Better Lives*, 356.

Other factors contributed to the downfall of the revitalization projects, including Rouse's death in 1996.<sup>57</sup> Between 2004 and 2008 over \$1.8 million was cut from Housing and Urban Development programs including affordable housing assistance programs.<sup>58</sup> The O'Malley administration focused on drug criminalization and increased policing, and the revitalization of Sandtown was not the priority.<sup>59</sup> Without the investment at the federal level, and the commitment of the city's mayor, the housing movement quickly lost much of the momentum that it previously had.

The death of Allan Tibbels, according to longtime Sandtown resident William Scipio, was another major blow to the neighborhood.<sup>60</sup> Tibbel, a native of Baltimore County, moved to Sandtown in 1986 because he felt called to make a difference in the city. Tibbels, his wife Susan, and friend Mark Gornik founded Sandtown Habitat for Humanity. They also started New Song Academy grade school and the New Song Community Learning Center, both of which remain important neighborhood institutions.<sup>61</sup> Tibbels was known as the backbone of the community and regarded by

---

<sup>57</sup> Paul Goldberger, "James W. Rouse, 81, Dies; Socially Conscious Developer Built New Townsand Malls," *New York Times*, April 10, 1996, <http://www.nytimes.com/1996/04/10/us/james-w-rouse-81-dies-socially-conscious-developer-built-new-townsand-malls.html>.

<sup>58</sup> Douglas Rice and Barbara Sard, "Decade of neglect has weakened federal low-income housing programs," *Center on Budget and Policy Priorities*, February 24, 2009, 13, <http://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/2-24-09hous.pdf>.

<sup>59</sup> Paul Schwartzman and John Wagner, "As Baltimore mayor, critics say, O'Malley's police tactics sowed distrust," *Washington Post*, April 25, 2015, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/dc-politics/as-mayor-of-baltimore-omalley-s-policing-strategy-sowed-mistrust/2015/04/25/af81178a-ea9d-11e4-9767-6276fc9b0ada\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.cc62c93828b4](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/dc-politics/as-mayor-of-baltimore-omalley-s-policing-strategy-sowed-mistrust/2015/04/25/af81178a-ea9d-11e4-9767-6276fc9b0ada_story.html?utm_term=.cc62c93828b4).

<sup>60</sup> William Scipio in discussion with the author, November 2016.

<sup>61</sup> Jacques Kelly and Erica L. Green, "Allan Tibbels, of Sandtown Habitat for Humanity, dies," *Baltimore Sun*, June 3, 2010.



many neighbors as a hero. As explained by Scipio, after his death the community lost a lot of momentum, despite the fact that many residents had vowed to uphold his legacy.<sup>62</sup>

The racial climate of the nation should also be taken into consideration when examining the execution of the revitalization efforts. Following the Rodney King riots in 1992, racial tensions became even more magnified in inner-city neighborhoods across the nation. The sudden and intensive interest the Enterprise Foundation took in the neighborhood was met with distrust and skepticism by some residents who did not want a group of majority white, middle-class people to come into their neighborhood and direct their lives. One of the earliest projects undertaken in Sandtown was the restoration of a mural that depicted African-American leaders. While this project was underway, a few residents sketched an alternate mural that depicted Rouse as a southern plantation owner and the residents as his slaves.<sup>63</sup> This story illustrates that overcoming the distrust between residents and organizers would have taken more than a few meetings and new housing.

The positive changes that came out of the revitalization efforts in the short-term cannot be overlooked. The education level of the neighborhood increased, teen pregnancy rates decreased, more residents became homeowners, and hundreds of housing units were either built or rehabilitated. The fruits of some of these efforts are still evident in the neighborhood today, whether through the brightly painted facades

---

<sup>62</sup> Leslie Williams, "Home is where the hard work is," *Baltimore Sun*, March 5, 1990.

<sup>63</sup> Olsen, *Better Places, Better Lives: A Biography of James Rouse*, 356.

of the Habitat for Humanity rowhouses, or the fact that many of the homeowners in the neighborhood today were only able to buy a house as a result of the programs of the 1990s. As explained by Chickie Grayson, president of Enterprise Homes of the Enterprise Foundation, “It gave 542 families the opportunity to own their own home, to have a mortgage they could sustain.... There are houses to show for it, and people are taking care of their homes.”<sup>64</sup> It is undoubtable that despite some of its shortcomings and lack of sustainability, CBP’s efforts did have a positive impact on the neighborhood.

The series of factors that contributed to the lack of sustained change in Sandtown cannot be blamed on one person, organization, or circumstance. The reversal of momentum that occurred was a result of a combination of factors, including the failure to train new leaders, lack of community engagement, a change in the political climate, and the death of community leaders. The decline of the neighborhood post-2000 contributed to the loss of population and increase in vacancy rates that the area still suffers from today.

### *The State of Sandtown Today*

Today, Sandtown-Winchester is a 72-block neighborhood in the northwest area of the city. It has a population of approximately 8,500. 96.6 percent of residents are African-American.<sup>65</sup> Half of children in the neighborhood live below the poverty line,

---

<sup>64</sup> Yvonne Wenger, “Saving Sandtown-Winchester: decade-long, multimillion-dollar investment questioned,” *Baltimore Sun*, May 10, 2015.

<sup>65</sup> Lawrence Lanahan, “Who Can Save Sandtown?” *Urbanite Baltimore*, accessed January 8, 2017, <http://www.urbanitebaltimore.com/100/who-can-save-sandtown/#sthash.cupaUvyk.dpbs>.

and a quarter of adults are unemployed. Only one in twenty residents has had any college education.<sup>66</sup> The homicide rate is more than double the citywide average.<sup>67</sup> In 2015 the neighborhood had the highest rates of incarceration of any census tract in the state of Maryland.<sup>68</sup> One in ten residents are on parole or on probation.<sup>69</sup>

It is estimated that there are approximately 848 vacant buildings in Sandtown-Winchester.<sup>70</sup> Many vacant properties exist within fully intact blocks, while others stand on hollowed out streets. For example, on the east side of North Gilmore Street between Baker and School Streets, there is a block of fully intact two-story rowhouses with only one vacant property. A few blocks away on North Bruce Street between Baker and Lorman, however, the street has been completely cleared leaving grassy lots abutting houses on the next streets over. Some blocks have half occupied, half vacant housing, others have gaps between rowhouses where tear downs occurred. The neighborhood has a patchwork appearance that is continually in flux as demolitions continue to occur and vacancy rates increase.

During the protests of late April 2015, significant property damage was done to some of the neighborhood's businesses. One such business that was burned was the

---

<sup>66</sup> Lawrence Lanahan, "Who Can Save Sandtown?" *Urbanite Baltimore*, accessed January 8, 2017, <http://www.urbanitebaltimore.com/100/who-can-save-sandtown/#sthash.cupaUvyk.dpbs>.

<sup>67</sup> Yvonne Wenger, "Saving Sandtown-Winchester: decade-long, multimillion-dollar investment questioned."

<sup>68</sup> Justin Fenton, "Report: Sandtown-Winchester leads state in number of people incarcerated," *Baltimore Sun*, February 25, 2015.

<sup>69</sup> William Scipio in discussion with the author, November 2016.

<sup>70</sup> See Baltimore CityView, <http://cityview.baltimorecity.gov/>.

Hae Tteuneum Market, a corner store at the intersection of Baker and Mount Streets, just across the street from the Gilmor Homes where Gray was arrested. The business was one of three convenience stores in the neighborhood owned by Korean immigrant Grace Lyo. This particular property of Lyo's was uninsured, but in June 2015 she stated that she planned to rebuild and reopen.<sup>71</sup> As of November 2016, the building remained a burned, hollowed-out shell with the sign on the wall the only remaining part of the market. Despite the damages that this and other businesses sustained, the neighborhood took immediate and active response to cleaning up after the protests. According to Scipio, dozens of residents and outsiders alike were in the streets in the days following helping to clean-up the wreckage.

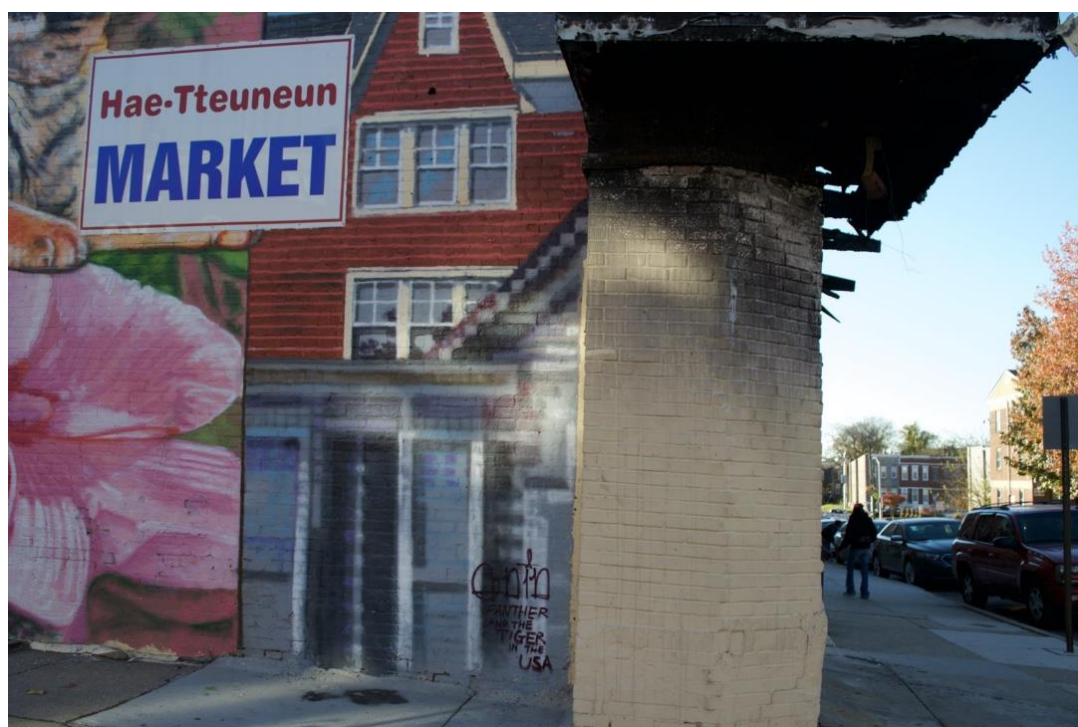


Illustration 2.2 Hae Tteunuem Market with existing damage from the riots of April 2015. Photograph by author, November 17, 2016.

---

<sup>71</sup> Jean Marbella, "Korean-American merchants face hurdles in rebuilding after Baltimore riot," *Baltimore Sun*, June 13, 2015.

There are organizations that continue to work on revitalization in Sandtown, though without the funding that was present in the 1990s. Resident Action Committee is a neighborhood advocacy organization that works to empower residents to make positive changes in the community. It is a member of the No Boundaries Coalition of Central West Baltimore, an alliance between several West Baltimore neighborhood organizations that brings residents of these areas together to discuss and address issues related to racial and economic discrimination and disparities. Some of the work they do includes advocacy campaigns, walking tours, block parties, public art projects, and leadership development. Habitat for Humanity of the Chesapeake continues to work in the neighborhood, and advertises their services by stretching banners across vacant properties. The neighborhood is home to over ten churches, nearly all of which have social services of some kind including after-school care and food pantries. Sarah's Hope, Baltimore's largest homeless shelter (operated by St. Vincent DePaul), opened a larger, newly renovated facility in 2015.<sup>72</sup>

A recent transportation project that was slated to improve service in the area could have had a positive effect on the neighborhood. Currently the area is served by one metro station along the eastern boundary of the neighborhood, the Penn North Station at Pennsylvania and North Avenues. The neighborhood is also serviced by three local bus routes. In the late 2000s, a new 14.1 mile east-west light rail line was planned to travel from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services in Baltimore

---

<sup>72</sup> Yvonne Wenger, "Sarah's Hope shelter doubles in size to serve homeless families," *Baltimore Sun*, October 8, 2015.

County, east through Sandtown and Harlem Park to the Bayview MARC Station in Baltimore City.<sup>73</sup> This highly anticipated \$2.9 billion investment was designed to improve the public transportation systems within the city and help connect city residents with county jobs.<sup>74</sup> Baltimore Heritage, the city's nonprofit historic preservation organization, with the financial support of the Baltimore City Department of Transportation, the Red Line Office, and the Maryland State Highway Administration, developed a series of brochures that told the history of the neighborhoods through which the line was to travel, as well as maps that pinpointed and described historic sites located along the red line.<sup>75</sup> Thus, this new light rail line would have provided more than just a ride, it would have brought public history to the attention of users. However, in June 2015 Governor Hogan cancelled the plan, citing the high costs of construction.<sup>76</sup> This move was highly criticized for wasting millions of dollars the state had spent on planning for the line, as well as for taking an opportunity away from predominately African-American communities in West Baltimore.<sup>77</sup> So controversial was this decision that civil rights groups and citizens in the city coalesced to file a complaint that petitions the U.S. Department of

---

<sup>73</sup> Fern Shen, "Residents, civil rights groups sue state over Red Line cancellation," *Baltimore Brew*, December 21, 2015, <https://baltimorebrew.com/2015/12/21/residents-civil-right-groups-sue-state-over-red-line-cancellation/>.

<sup>74</sup> Michael Dresser and Luke Broadwater, "Hogan says no to Red Line, yes to Purple," *Baltimore Sun*, June 25, 2015.

<sup>75</sup> Eli Pousson, in discussion with the author, November 2016.

<sup>76</sup> Michael Dresser and Luke Broadwater, "Hogan says no to Red Line, yes to Purple," *Baltimore Sun*, June 25, 2015.

<sup>77</sup> Sandy Smith, "Could Better Transportation Planning Have Saved Baltimore's Red Line?" *Next City*, June 30, 2015, <https://nextcity.org/daily/entry/hogan-maryland-purple-line-no-red-line-baltimore>.

Transportation to investigate whether the state's decision violates federal law, since Hogan instead chose to invest state money in another light rail line in a part of the state with a higher white population.<sup>78</sup> The result is that along with all of the other resources that the neighborhood lacks, the status quo of poor transportation remains.

The Sandtown-Winchester Transformation Initiative was a well-intentioned project that created at least some short-term change in the neighborhood. It helped create affordable housing in the neighborhood and connected people with jobs. However, the project's failure to create long-term change in the neighborhood provides important lessons for Baltimore. One of CBP's major downfalls was that they became too focused on a singular issue: housing. Focusing on this alone meant that other important issues were ignored. Similarly, today Project C.O.R.E. attempts to address one issue: vacant housing. As important as the built environment is, merely altering it cannot bring about long-lasting change for neighborhood residents. The lack of sustained change in Sandtown has to a certain extent poisoned the relationship that the neighborhood has with the city, making residents more hesitant to trust any plan or scheme introduced that is meant to 'improve' their community.

---

<sup>78</sup> Fern Shen, "Residents, civil rights groups sue state over Red Line cancellation," *Baltimore Brew*, December 21, 2015, <https://baltimorebrew.com/2015/12/21/residents-civil-right-groups-sue-state-over-red-line-cancellation/>.

### CHAPTER THREE

#### RIGHTSIZING HISTORY, IMPLEMENTATION, AND RELATION TO HISTORIC PRESERVATION

For decades, Baltimore policy-makers have been implementing urban policies and programs based on a growth paradigm. These policies and reinvestment strategies were designed to promote neighborhood revitalization by stabilizing select areas and spurring growth in others. Baltimore has shifted to a shrinking cities mindset, and is now pursuing demolition as its primary urban policy. Rightsizing is an urban policy inspired by ideas that emerged in the late 1970s which has only recently become central to planning in legacy cities. It is the basis of the Project C.O.R.E. initiative, which seeks to eliminate vacancy in some of the most distressed housing markets in the city through widespread demolition. In response to concerns that this policy would result in the loss of historic resources, historic preservation advocates have inserted themselves in conversations about rightsizing and have begun to advise cities about how to carry out the policy while being mindful of historic resources and neighborhoods. Largely heralded by cities as having a positive impact on eliminating blight in urban landscapes, recent research suggests that rightsizing is having a negative impact on low-income communities in terms of social isolation and economic stability. Without substantial evidence to prove that rightsizing is a successful strategy for shrinking cities, blindly implementing it as urban policy will be damaging for Baltimore.

This chapter discusses the history of rightsizing as planning theory and practice. Next it discusses how rightsizing policies were first implemented in



American cities. It then includes a literature review of rightsizing and a review of the major problems with the theory. It concludes with a discussion of how historic preservation has become involved in rightsizing policy discussions. The purpose of this chapter is to provide context to the theory behind Project C.O.R.E.

### ***Origins of Rightsizing***

Rightsizing has been defined numerous ways by both scholars and practitioners. One of the most exhaustive definitions comes from Joseph Schilling, founder of the Vacant Properties Research Network, and Jonathan Logan, who define rightsizing as “stabilizing dysfunctional markets and distressed neighborhoods by more closely aligning a city’s built environment with the needs of existing and foreseeable future populations by adjusting the amount of land available for development.”<sup>1</sup> Planning professors Deborah E. and Frank J. Popper note that “smart decline requires thinking about who and what remains,” and may include “reorganizing or “eliminating” some city services, and changing land uses.”<sup>2</sup> The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, an independent federal agency defines rightsizing as a “process through which legacy cities address significant physical and social changes to undergo a reduction to an optimal size.”<sup>3</sup> The common thread of all

---

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Schilling and Jonathan Logan, “Greening the rust belt: a green infrastructure model for rightsizing American cities,” *Journal of the American Planning Association* 74, no. 4 (2008): 452.

<sup>2</sup> Deborah E. Popper and Frank J. Popper, “Small can be beautiful: Coming to terms with decline,” *Planning* 68, no. 7: 21-22.

<sup>3</sup> “Managing Change: Rightsizing and Preservation in America,” *The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation*, 2014, accessed March 19, 2017, v, [https://www.novoco.com/sites/default/files/atoms/files/achp\\_rightsizing\\_report\\_030514.pdf](https://www.novoco.com/sites/default/files/atoms/files/achp_rightsizing_report_030514.pdf).

of these definitions is that rightsizing involves adjusting the size of a city's footprint and built environment in order to better address the size and needs of the current and projected population.

Rightsizing arose as a response to the challenges faced by legacy cities. Although cities have been losing population since 1950, many city planners and other government officials in those cities acknowledge that shrinkage is the new normal, and that planning should be carried out with the idea that decline will continue to some degree. In the face of challenges associated with declining populations, including a smaller tax base, an abundance of vacant properties, and a depressed real estate market, rightsizing has emerged as a way to reduce the number of vacant and abandoned properties in cities, and to force cities to direct investment money in select areas.

Rightsizing represents a major shift in urban planning. Mid-20<sup>th</sup> century urban renewal schemes were implemented based on concerns about the state of inner cities, but still emphasized population growth. Widespread demolition occurred for the sake of clearing land for new developments, not because cities had accepted the fact that they were losing population. Following large-scale urban renewal projects, the Urban Development Action Grants program was introduced. Administered by the federal government's Department of Housing and Urban Development, the program started in 1977 and provided \$5 billion over the course of 11 years to revitalize distressed urban neighborhoods.<sup>4</sup> The program was decried by preservationists as the "new urban

---

<sup>4</sup> Ingrid W. Reed, "The Life and Death of UDAG: An Assessment Based on Eight Projects in Five New Jersey Cities," *Publius* 19, no. 3 (1989): 93.

renewal.”<sup>5</sup> Downtown revitalization plans of the 1980s and 1990s focused on “bringing people back to the inner city.”<sup>6</sup> After decades of strategies that emphasized attracting people to cities and retaining city residents, rightsizing emphasized planning for continued population loss.

The first acknowledgements that decline may be the inevitable future of cities occurred in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In 1976 Roger Starr asserted in the *New York Times* that “If the city is to survive with a smaller population, the population must be encouraged to concentrate itself in the sections that remain alive.”<sup>7</sup> Starr, administrator of New York City’s Housing and Development Administration from 1974 to 1976, advocated for federal housing subsidies to incentivize people to move out of depopulated neighborhoods, and for cities to cut off all services to these areas, effectively letting them die. It was understood that letting certain sections of the city that had faced the greatest decline die out would save the city money and allow it to focus its resources elsewhere.<sup>8</sup>

This idea that Starr first articulated is known as triage, a medical term used to describe how to assign degrees of urgency to injuries. In the context of cities, triage means planning for shrinkage by selecting areas of the city that are the most logical places to concentrate resources. The idea behind this strategy is that it is necessary to

---

<sup>5</sup> Ann Satterthwaite, “UDAG: Is it the new urban renewal? *Preservation News* 19, no. 12 (1979): 1.

<sup>6</sup> Michael A. Tomlan, *Historic Preservation: Caring for our Expanding Legacy*, (New York: Springer International Publishing, 2015), 83.

<sup>7</sup> Roger Starr, “Making New York Smaller,” *New York Times*, November 14, 1976.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

exclude services from certain areas of the city despite their need for them because the need is so high in these areas that no amount of services would be sufficient enough to make enough of a difference. The result of the implementation of these concepts would be to increase the efficiency of the city both by saving money, and by being able to “save” neighborhoods that might otherwise decline if not for a stronger investment in city services and programs. In theory, by planning for what Starr determined to be inevitable—shrinkage—cities would not squander resources in areas that were presumed to have lost the capacity to ever thrive again.<sup>9</sup>

The concept of triage in city planning was more fully explored in a 1982 piece in *Social Policy*, where the authors describe the four possible types of triage that could happen in cities. The first form of triage directs public resources non-geographically, but which could result in certain geographic areas from being cut off.<sup>10</sup> Triage II focuses on distributing services based on location, but not by favoring certain locations over others. Triage III delineates between census tracts to determine where resources will be distributed. For instance, areas with high levels of abandoned buildings would not be given funding, while other more stable tracts would have priority to receive funding. In Triage IV, more specific geographic areas are given priority for the distribution of goods and services. All of these strategies except for Triage I are designed with a specific result in mind.<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> Peter Marcuse, Peter Medoff, and Andrea Pereira, “Triage as Urban Policy,” *Social Policy* 12, no. 3, (1982): 34.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 35.

During the post-urban crisis era of the 1970s-1990s when these ideas were introduced, cities in decline continued to plan for renewal. In this time period demolition remained an ad hoc strategy that addressed vacancy in piecemeal fashion. For example, in Baltimore, demolitions most likely occurred as a result of citizen complaints about a vacant property in a neighborhood. There is no documentation of any city during this time period including demolition as part of overreaching citywide planning or policy.

This policy strategy represented a paradigm shift in urban planning because previously theories of planning were oriented towards growth trajectories. Growth for cities in population meant growth in tax revenue and economic activity. Planning was oriented towards the positive, and growth was always a point of pride for cities. Acknowledging decline was detrimental to the image of many cities, particularly ones that had experienced so much growth over the course of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Planning for current and future decline instead of growth became a new challenge for cities.

### ***Early Implementation of Rightsizing Policies***

Although the theory was introduced in the late 1970s and early 1980s, cities did not begin implementing rightsizing policies until the mid to late 2000s. The first city to pursue rightsizing policies was New Orleans. In the first five years following Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, Louisiana, the city lost 30,000 people.<sup>12</sup> The city

had been losing population prior to the hurricane; the 1960 population of the city was 627,525, and by 2005 it was 452,170.<sup>13</sup> Despite the horror of the effects that the massive flooding and damage had on the city, some viewed the city post-Katrina with new optimism, describing it as a “blank slate” that should be downsized in order to both address blight, and “reduce the risk from future flooding.”<sup>14</sup> Flooding damaged 134,000 housing units, which comprised 70 percent of the city’s occupied housing at the time.<sup>15</sup> In response to these challenges, New Orleans officials pursued rightsizing as a way to create more dense neighborhoods in a smaller area.<sup>16</sup>

An early response to addressing the massive and immediate outflux of residents was the Bring New Orleans Back Commission (BNOBC), a group appointed by Mayor Nagin that represented the diversity of the city. BNOBC advised the city to consolidate residential areas, and evaluate neighborhood viability based on the number of residents who return to their properties. BNOBC sought to restrict redevelopment in certain areas, fearing that “partial rebuilding” in various parts of the city would create redeveloped areas surrounded by blight.<sup>17</sup> In January 2006 they unveiled plans for the

---

<sup>12</sup> Allison Plyer, “Population Loss and Vacant Housing in New Orleans neighborhoods,” *Greater New Orleans Community Data Center*, February 5, 2011, accessed March 19, 2017, [https://gnocdc.s3.amazonaws.com/reports/GNOCDC\\_PopulationLossAndVacantHousingInNewOrleansNeighborhoods.pdf](https://gnocdc.s3.amazonaws.com/reports/GNOCDC_PopulationLossAndVacantHousingInNewOrleansNeighborhoods.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> Renia Ehrenfeucht and Marla Nelson, “Recovery in a Shrinking City: Challenges to Rightsizing Post-Katrina New Orleans,” in *The City After Abandonment*, eds. Margaret Dewar and June Manning Thomas, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 137.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 141.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 134.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 133.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 141.

city that featured a map where residential neighborhoods that would be turned into parkland instead of rehabilitated were covered by a green dot. This map, along with accompanying plans, sparked outrage from residents who viewed this proposal as forced displacement. According to Ehrenfeucht and Nelson, the BNOBC failed to make the planning process inclusive, and did not initially have alternative plans or responses to concerned residents.<sup>18</sup>

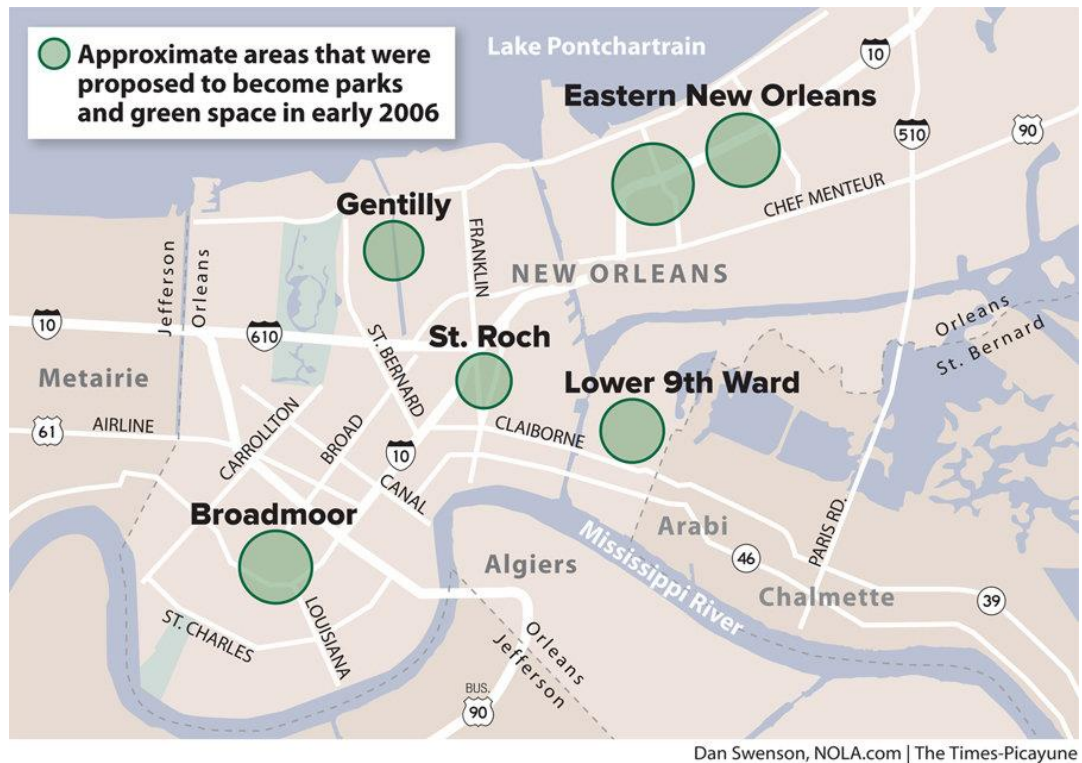


Figure 3.1. A recreation of the ‘green dot map.’ By Dan Swenson for *The Times-Picayune*, April 21, 2015.

<sup>18</sup> Renia Ehrenfeucht and Marla Nelson, “Recovery in a Shrinking City: Challenges to Rightsizing Post-Katrina New Orleans,” in *The City After Abandonment*, eds. Margaret Dewar and June Manning Thomas, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 142.

Youngstown, Ohio became the first city to adopt policies of shrinkage into its comprehensive planning strategy with the *Youngstown 2010* plan. Unveiled in 2005, the plan set forth a vision of renewing the post-industrial city that would be smaller both in population and in physical size. It featured a chapter called “Citywide Conditions,” that explained how Youngstown’s population loss had affected the plan. The city lost over half of its population between 1960 and 2000, and in 2000 had 3,325 vacant housing units, which amounts to more than a 15 percent total vacancy rate.<sup>19</sup> A major component of this chapter is a map overlay that aligns “high structure index problems” with areas of low-density, designating sections of four neighborhoods deemed to be “beyond any hope of short-term solutions.”<sup>20</sup> The plan called for a thirty percent decrease in land intended for industrial uses.<sup>21</sup> It also called for focusing revitalization efforts along commercial corridors that receive the most activity due to their location.<sup>22</sup>

When it was announced, the city’s plan received considerable national media attention. In December 2006, the plan was reviewed in *New York Times Magazine* in a piece titled “Creative Shrinkage,” where it was proclaimed as a way to create a new identity for the city. Author Belinda Lanks called Youngstown’s experiment a “new

---

<sup>19</sup> “The Youngstown 2010 Citywide Plan,” *City of Youngstown*, 2005, accessed February 7, 2017, 31, [http://www.cityofyoungstownoh.com/about\\_youngstown/youngstown\\_2010/plan/final\\_plan/Ytown2010\\_chapter4.pdf](http://www.cityofyoungstownoh.com/about_youngstown/youngstown_2010/plan/final_plan/Ytown2010_chapter4.pdf).

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.



solution” for “rock bottom” cities.<sup>23</sup> At the time the *Christian Science Monitor* reviewed the plan in 2009, none of the residents had taken the \$50,000 incentive to move out of disinvested areas so that whole neighborhoods could be razed. The *Monitor* called the plan “groundbreaking,” and noted its influence on other cities who looked at adopting similar plans, such as Flint and Buffalo.<sup>24</sup> In 2006 the city won the National Planning Excellence Award for Community Outreach from the National Planning Association.<sup>25</sup>

Youngstown was the first city that made it acceptable to admit that it was shrinking, and was not likely to regain the population it had lost. This radical proclamation influenced the planning of other cities. In 2000 Buffalo had approximately 23,000 vacant housing units. The Blueprint Buffalo Plan of 2006 described the city’s challenge as “how to readjust or “rightsized” the physical and built environment so that it better aligns with the current and projected population.”<sup>26</sup> Between 1995 and the publication of the report, Buffalo had spent more than 30 million dollars to demolish more than 4,500 vacant buildings.<sup>27</sup> In 2014 the Detroit

---

<sup>23</sup> Belinda Lanks, “Creative Shrinkage,” *New York Times Magazine*, December 10, 2006.

<sup>24</sup> Jeremy Kutner, “A Rust Belt city tries to shrink its way to success,” *Christian Science Monitor*, May 29, 2009, <http://www.csmonitor.com/Business/2009/0529/a-rust-belt-city-tries-to-shrink-its-way-to-success>.

<sup>25</sup> “The Youngstown 2010 Citywide Plan,” *City of Youngstown, Ohio*, 2005, accessed February 7, 2017, [http://www.youngstownohio.gov/about\\_youngstown/youngstown\\_2010/index.aspx](http://www.youngstownohio.gov/about_youngstown/youngstown_2010/index.aspx).

<sup>26</sup> “Blueprint Buffalo: Regional strategies and local tools for reclaiming vacant properties in the city and suburbs of Buffalo,” *National Vacant Properties Campaign*, 9, <http://uploads.oneregioforward.org/content/uploads/2013/03/FINAL-BlueprintBuffalo-Action-Plan.pdf>.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

Blight Removal Task Force released a report that outlined the city's intent to demolish 86,000 buildings. At this point Detroit had already demolished thousands of buildings and was one of the most well-recognized shrinking cities.<sup>28</sup>

The City of Philadelphia was another early leader in rightsizing. In 2001 the city started the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative (NTI), a plan to address the city's vacant building problem. In 1999 the city had at least 27,000 vacant properties.<sup>29</sup> From 2001 to 2007 the city demolished 5,657 vacant buildings at a cost of \$306.7 million raised through bond sales.<sup>30</sup> The locations of demolitions were determined through the creation of a housing market analysis map that rated the housing market of every neighborhood, classifying them into six categories. This map was created by The Reinvestment Fund, a community development financial institution (CDFI) started in Philadelphia in 1985 that along with providing loans and financial assistance for housing also completes data research and analysis. The Reinvestment Fund was brought to Baltimore in 2006 to help reverse the decline Oliver neighborhood in East Baltimore.<sup>31</sup>

The primary impediment to NTI's success was the fact that the initiative focused solely on blight removal, and did not include plans for redevelopment. As a

---

<sup>28</sup> "Detroit Blight Removal Task Force Plan," *Detroit Blight Removal Task Force*, 2014.

<sup>29</sup> Brent D. Ryan, *Design After Decline: How America Rebuilds Shrinking Cities*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 179-180.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 180.

<sup>31</sup> "The Reinvestment Fund at 30: Insights and New Directions," *Cascade* No. 89, Fall 2015, [https://www.philadelphiafed.org/community-development/publications/cascade/89/04\\_the-reinvestment-fund](https://www.philadelphiafed.org/community-development/publications/cascade/89/04_the-reinvestment-fund).

result, the city was left with thousands of vacant lots that had the effect of depressing surrounding land values. Brent D. Ryan described this lack of vision “doubly costly,” because without a strategic plan for how vacant parcels would be used post-demolitions, the results differed little from parcel-by-parcel demolition programs of the previous century.<sup>32</sup> In failing to demolish whole blocks that would create large areas of land that would attract new development, demolitions occurred piecemeal and created pockets of vacant lots situated between remaining buildings. As he notes, demolition did not create strategies for depressed neighborhoods, nor did it “create development markets where there had been none before.”<sup>33</sup>

In 2007 the National Vacant Properties Campaign convened the *Reclaiming Vacant Properties: Strategies for Rebuilding America’s Neighborhoods* conference in Pittsburgh. The conference was reportedly the first national conference centered on vacant and abandoned properties. Out of this came a report that outlined the process and planning strategies for rightsizing, including tools for planners and officials to use to implement these ideas. The conference included policy makers, planning practitioners, academics, and others from shrinking cities across the country who participated in a policy charrette that led to the creation of preliminary action plan.<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>32</sup> Brent D. Ryan, *Design After Decline: How America Rebuilds Shrinking Cities*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 182.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> “Right Sizing America’s Shrinking Cities: Results of the Policy Charrette and Model Action Plan,” *National Vacant Properties Campaign (Center for Community Progress)*, September 2007, 2, [http://www.cudc.kent.edu/projects\\_research/research/rsc\\_final\\_report.pdf](http://www.cudc.kent.edu/projects_research/research/rsc_final_report.pdf).

In 2010 the Center for Community Progress started, building off of the work of both the National Vacant Properties Campaign and the Genesee Institute.<sup>35</sup> The Center for Community Progress is a nonprofit organization “dedicated to building a future in which vacant and abandoned properties no longer exist.”<sup>36</sup> Its three areas of impact are in Technical Assistance, Leadership & Education, and Policy & Research. Technical assistance is provided by the organization’s consultants, who provide communities with information about vacant property maintenance and reuse strategies including land banking, strategic code enforcement, and property data collection and management practices among others.<sup>37</sup> Leadership and Education initiatives are administered through two key programs—the Reclaiming Vacant Properties Conference, and the Community Progress and Leadership Institute.<sup>38</sup> The Center also conducts policy research to determine best practices for vacant property management.<sup>39</sup>

Though rightsizing has gained popularity as a planning policy, not every shrinking city has accepted it as the best strategy to address its problems. In February 2017 the city of Akron, Ohio released a report entitled “Planning to Grow Akron.”

---

<sup>35</sup> “About,” *The Center for Community Progress*, accessed April 11, 2017, <http://www.communityprogress.net/about-pages-4.php>.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> “Technical Assistance,” *Center for Community Progress*, accessed April 11, 2017, <http://www.communityprogress.net/capacity-building-pages-45.php>.

<sup>38</sup> “Leadership & Education,” *Center for Community Progress*, accessed April 11, 2017, <http://www.communityprogress.net/leadership-and-education-pages-413.php>.

<sup>39</sup> “Policy & Research,” *Center for Community Progress*, accessed April 11, 2017, <http://www.communityprogress.net/policy-and-research-pages-517.php>.

This plan rejects the predominant declining cities narrative, and instead focuses on efforts to increase the city's tax base, and attract new residents. In pursuit of this ambitious plan, the city describes utilizing strategies to promote private investment, through both Community Reinvestment Areas and Property Tax Abatements, and maintaining neighborhoods and current housing stock.<sup>40</sup> Planning and development director and author of the report Jason Segedy rejected the perceived notion that the city should plan for shrinkage saying "a shrinking cities model of mothballing infrastructure and relocating residents will not serve us well. Instead of putting precious time, energy, and money into shrinking, let's build on our neighborhood assets, and figure out how to grow again."<sup>41</sup> The city hopes to grow from its current population of 198,000 to 250,000 people by 2050.<sup>42</sup> In the same way that Youngstown's plan to shrink was a radical notion over ten years ago, today Akron's refusal to plan for shrinkage despite the challenges it faces is almost as equally extremist.

### ***Literature on Rightsizing Policies***

For over a decade scholars have been reviewing and debating the theory of rightsizing, its implementation, and to a lesser degree, its effects. This section reviews the work of a few key authors whose writing continues to frame discussions around

---

<sup>40</sup> Jason Segedy, "Planning to grow Akron," *City of Akron*, 2017, 24, [http://www.akronohio.gov/cms/PTG\\_Akron\\_Report/planning\\_to\\_grow\\_akron\\_report\\_final\\_\\_2\\_6\\_17\\_.pdf](http://www.akronohio.gov/cms/PTG_Akron_Report/planning_to_grow_akron_report_final__2_6_17_.pdf).

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

rightsizing. Its purpose is to explain how rightsizing has been discussed as a planning policy in academia in order to understand how the theory is perceived among planners and scholars.

In 1995 Witold Rybczynski, architect and author, wrote a piece for *The Atlantic* titled “Downsizing Cities,” in which he advocated for cities to become smaller.<sup>43</sup> The piece was one of the first times since the late 1970s that shrinkage for cities had been introduced in popular discourse. He describes shrinking cities as an increasingly common phenomenon that only downsizing can solve. Rybczynski echoed the conclusions of Starr, and wrote that cities need to choose which neighborhoods are viable, and that people should be relocated out of highly distressed neighborhoods to allow for widespread clearance to occur in those areas. Acknowledging that the neighborhoods most likely to be affected by these policies would be minority neighborhoods, he noted “Much would depend on the ability of minority leaders to see that given the lack of real alternatives, abandoning half-empty neighborhoods is not necessarily a political defeat.”<sup>44</sup> This suggests his belief that revitalizing lower-income, minority neighborhoods is more of a political show than an achievable goal. He also claimed that what we now describe as rightsizing policies are no more heartless than “providing services to many poor and depopulated neighborhoods, which are occasionally half revived with community-development projects and then left on their own to decay even further.” He ends by noting that these

---

<sup>43</sup> Witold Rybczynski, “Downsizing Cities,” *The Atlantic*, October 1995, accessed March 19, 2017, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1995/10/downsizing-cities/308395/>.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

policies cannot, on their own, “solve the problem of unemployment and urban poverty.”<sup>45</sup>

Four years later Witold Rybczynski and professor and real estate professional Peter Linneman introduced an expanded argument about shrinking cities. Their 1999 article in the public policy journal *Public Interest* “How to save our shrinking cities,” argued that population loss is not always bad for cities if through the planning process these cities are redesigned as both smaller and better places to live.<sup>46</sup> Their argument begins with a history of the rise and fall of America’s large industrial cities. They then described a distinction between horizontal and vertical cities. Vertical cities, developed during the industrial era, have higher densities, mass transportation that connects suburb to city, and have walkable downtowns and neighborhoods.<sup>47</sup> Horizontal cities, developed after World War II, are designed for cars, have lower densities, and more private than public amenities.<sup>48</sup> Vertical cities are their concern, because these cities are historically older and denser, and thus more adversely affected by population loss. They discussed the negative consequences of shrinking, including a reduced tax base, reduced density, and the lower quality of urban life. They liken a city to a shopping mall, arguing that just as if a mall was losing tenants, one of the most logical strategies for the mall owner would be to shrink the size of the mall so

---

<sup>45</sup> Witold Rybczynski, “Downsizing Cities,” *The Atlantic*, October 1995, accessed March 19, 2017, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1995/10/downsizing-cities/308395/>.

<sup>46</sup> Witold Rybczynski and Peter D Linneman, “How to save our shrinking cities,” *Public Interest* 135, (1999): 40.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

that it could be at full occupancy and cover all its costs. Thus, they suggest, a city should follow the same model, closing off certain sections so that the city can afford to maintain the remaining areas.<sup>49</sup> Rybczynski and Linneman suggest regional government strategies like annexation, vacant lot strategies such as greening, and downzoning, as a few methods of planning for shrinking cities.<sup>50</sup>

This piece was a critical contribution to discussions about how to plan for “smart decline.” It reintroduced the concept of planning for decline back into planning circles that had previously been more focused on planning for growth. The authors conclusions that revitalization is nearly impossible once a city has reached a certain level of depopulation, and that cities facing these problems cannot “resist the idea of downsizing,” were bold declarations.<sup>51</sup> The suggestions that Rybczynski and Linneman gave for shrinking cities would become critical components of plans like *Youngstown 2010* less than a decade later.

In 2008 Joseph Schilling, associate director of the Green Regions Initiative for Virginia Tech’s Metropolitan Institute, and Jonathan Logan, design coordinator at the Rochester Community Design Center, introduced their ideas for how to rightsize cities to effectively implement urban greening programs. In their piece “Greening the rust belt: a green infrastructure model for rightsizing American cities,” they argued that current planning models cannot deal with urban shrinkage, and that cities should

---

<sup>49</sup> Witold Rybczynski and Peter D Linneman, “How to save our shrinking cities,” *Public Interest* 135, (1999): 30-35.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 30-44.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.



reclaim vacant and abandoned properties for the purpose of demolition. Clearance, they argued, then allows for urban greening programs from the creation of parks and green spaces, to the potential for job creation in this sector, including the creation of renewable energy through lot greening.<sup>52</sup>

The three strategies they suggest for rightsizing cities are “...instituting a green infrastructure program and plan;...creating a land bank to manage the right-sizing effort; and...building community consensus through collaborative neighborhood planning.”<sup>53</sup> They argued for green infrastructure planning, which could take the form of community gardens, pocket parks, and/or storm water management sites, because these strategies have the capacity to eliminate blighted lots and empower communities to have greater control over land in their neighborhood. They suggested the creation of land banks because of their ability to inventory properties for either future reuse or demolition, recognizing the local legislation and funding that land banks require.<sup>54</sup> Finally Schilling and Logan advocated for inclusive community planning in order to ensure that rightsizing planning takes into account the needs and desires of the people it will effect.<sup>55</sup>

In 2011, Justin B. Hollander, professor of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning at Tufts University, and Jeremy Németh, professor of Urban and Regional

---

<sup>52</sup> Joseph Schilling and Jonathan Logan, “Greening the rust belt: a green infrastructure model for rightsizing American cities,” *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 74, no. 4 (2008): 455.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 452.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 458-459.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 460.

Planning at the University of Colorado Denver, framed their discussion about planning for shrinkage from an equity perspective in order to provide planning professionals a guide from which to plan in a more “thoughtful and broad-based manner.”<sup>56</sup> In “The Bounds of Smart Decline: a foundational theory for planning shrinking cities,” the authors defined shrinkage, and then explained how urban shrinkage is an inevitable part of the neighborhood life-cycle theory without some level of intervention.<sup>57</sup> They argued that the dominant practices of planning for smart decline are top-down, assumes a blank slate rather than acknowledging the residents who still live in “shrinking” neighborhoods, and require that the public does not speak out.<sup>58</sup>

The framework they provided was based on their assertion that social justice is at the core of all ethical planning discussions.<sup>59</sup> There are five tenants to their framework for how to plan for smart decline: the planning process “must include and explicitly recognize multiple voices;” it “should be political and deliberative in nature;” “should provide information that enables citizens to recognize and challenge power imbalances and structures of domination;” should “be transparent and value different types and sources of information;” and “should be regional in scope, but local in control and implementation.”<sup>60</sup> This framework is based on what they perceive

---

<sup>56</sup> Justin Hollander and Jeremy Németh, “The bounds of smart decline: a foundational theory for planning shrinking cities.” *Housing Policy Debate* 21 no. 3, (2011): 351.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 352.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 355-356.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 357.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 358; 359; 360; 361.

to be the weaknesses of smart decline planning in practice. They noted that when cities are in periods of decline, there are often “few crumbs” to distribute, and the poorest communities often suffer the most.<sup>61</sup> They suggested that implementing more inclusive, bottom-up planning frameworks is the only way to ensure that disenfranchised communities do not become victims of rightsizing.

This sampling of some of the literature on rightsizing policy published in planning and policy journals represents some of the perspectives on and strategies for rightsizing planning from scholars since 1999. Rybczynski and Linneman suggest that shrinking can be good for cities, and suggest several policy strategies to redesign places managing decline. Schilling and Logan examine decline from an environmental perspective, and provide ways that greening can both improve the ecology of the city as well as create jobs in green infrastructure. Hollander and Németh assert that concerns about equity should be central to any rightsizing plan. These discussions, along with those by dozens of other scholars, have had implications on the design and implementation of rightsizing strategies.

### ***Problems with Rightsizing Policy***

Problems with rightsizing were introduced as early as the theory itself. The problems first identified with ‘triage’ remain when analyzing the effects rightsizing has had on cities. In the 1982 article “Triage as Social Policy,” the first argument against triage was that the problems experienced by neighborhoods in decline were not

---

<sup>61</sup> Hollander and Németh, “The bounds of smart decline: a foundational theory for planning shrinking cities,” 363.

inevitable, but were fostered by specific urban policies. Thus problems created by certain policies could be solved by new ones. Another issue noted was that triage was responsible for creating many of the problems that have in turn created the need for more triage. The loss of jobs and population from the inner city was fundamental to this cycle. The authors also mentioned that there is no evidence to support the idea that disinvesting in certain areas is a better use of resources than employing other methods of distributing resources. They argued that “triage destroys communities just at a time when the values of community preservation are being recognized as central to national urban policy.”<sup>62</sup> The authors expressed their belief that perhaps triage is not even necessary, and suggested that the nation is well-equipped to handle the problems of city neighborhoods.

The most significant argument against triage is that the poor will suffer the most from these policies. Despite the cost-effectiveness of the policy for the city, the minority poor will suffer most from declining city services and programs.<sup>63</sup> This concern, first mentioned over thirty years ago, remains true in 2017.

Similar arguments against these policies were recently launched by Jason Hackworth, professor of planning and geography at the University of Toronto. In his report “Demolition as Urban Policy in the Rust Belt,” he raises two major issues with rightsizing. The first is that ad hoc demolition has been framed as a small intervention as an effort to raise nearby property values, but since 1970, the number of demolitions

---

<sup>62</sup> Peter Marcuse, Peter Medoff, and Andrea Pereira, “Triage as Urban Policy,” *Social Policy* 12, no. 3, (1982): 35.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

has exceeded that of the urban renewal period that preceded it. These small interventions he suggests have actually had a larger impact on the built environment than large-scale, federally funded schemes. Second, although proponents of demolition policy argue that demolition has regenerative qualities, demolitions have actually made neighborhoods more marginalized.<sup>64</sup>

In support of his first point, Hackworth describes both the factors that led up to the period of urban renewal, and what propelled the urban renewal period that he distinguishes as occurring between 1950 and 1970. He then describes how economic downturns in the early 1970s led to the decline in mass demolition and redevelopment projects seen in the previous era of urban policy.<sup>65</sup> In general, since 1970 municipalities have pursued an ad-hoc, building by building demolition strategy. They were not necessarily part of a citywide planning scheme, or for redevelopment, with Detroit's Poletown neighborhood, the Hope VI program, and New London Connecticut's waterfront neighborhood as a few notable exceptions.<sup>66</sup> In the Poletown neighborhood, the City of Detroit controversially exercised its powers of eminent domain to demolish the entire area in order to allow General Motors to build an assembly plant.<sup>67</sup> Through the Hope VI low-income housing program of the 1990s, grants supported "selective demolition" of public housing towers and other dilapidated

---

<sup>64</sup> Jason Hackworth, "Demolition as urban policy in the American rust belt," *Environment and Planning A* 48 no. 11 (2016): 2203-2204.

<sup>65</sup> Hackworth, "Demolition as urban policy in the American rust belt," 2205.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Michael Tomlan, *Historic Preservation: Caring for our Expanding Legacy*, (New York: Springer International Publishing, 2015), 131.

housing to build new low-rise units.<sup>68</sup> The case-by-case demolitions have largely been the result of code violations, tax foreclosure, arson, or other infractions and have mostly taken place in declining, disinvested neighborhoods. Although urban renewal clearance has received more attention, particularly among scholars, in part because it took place over a shorter period of time and cleared whole blocks as opposed to piecemeal properties, the reality is that ad hoc demolitions post-1970 have affected more total land area and housing units than urban renewal.<sup>69</sup>

The second major point to Hackworth's argument—that extensive demolition has done more harm to neighborhoods than good—is supported by the study he conducted of demolitions in distressed neighborhoods in cities that have lost significant population. In his study he examined 269 neighborhoods in 49 shrinking cities that have lost more than 50 percent of their housing since 1970.<sup>70</sup> He describes these areas as Extreme Housing Loss Neighborhoods (EHLN) because the primary housing intervention strategy in these areas has been demolition. Hackworth sampled all cities across New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin that met this criteria, and included St. Louis and Louisville for their economic similarities to other cities in the region, but omitted New York City for its uniqueness. The EHLNs were compared against moderate housing loss

---

<sup>68</sup> Michael Tomlan, *Historic Preservation: Caring for our Expanding Legacy*, (New York: Springer International Publishing, 2015), 155.

<sup>69</sup> Hackworth, "Demolition as Urban Policy in the American rust belt," 2210-2211.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 2203.

neighborhoods, areas that have lost between 0 and 49.9 percent of their housing since 1970, and growing neighborhoods that have added housing units, in the same cities.<sup>71</sup>

The study also examined the change in housing markets and the change in social marginality. In EHL neighborhoods, the owner-occupancy rate was 30.1 percent, more than half of what it was in growing neighborhoods.<sup>72</sup> By 2010 this percentage had fallen to 26.9 percent, but so had that of growing neighborhoods.<sup>73</sup> This reveals, however, that there are fewer owner-occupied housing units in EHLNs than there were forty years ago. High rates of homeownership are frequently employed as a measurement of neighborhood health, so the fact that these neighborhoods have less homeowners than they previously did suggest that they are less stable today. In 1970 the difference between the vacancy rate in EHL and middle loss and growing neighborhoods was less than ten percent. By 2010, the vacancy rate in EHL neighborhoods had grown by 14.9 percent, and was 15.8 points higher than in growing neighborhoods.<sup>74</sup>

In terms of social marginality, Hackworth's results revealed that EHL neighborhoods not only had majority African-American populations to begin with, but also became more African-American over the course of forty years. Between 1970 and 2010 the disparity in household income and unemployment rates also increased between EHLNs and growing neighborhoods. In 2010 there was a 16.4 percent gap

---

<sup>71</sup> Hackworth, "Demolition as urban policy in the American rust belt," 2208.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 2211.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 2213.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

between growing neighborhoods and EHL neighborhoods in residents who had some college education. The results show that neighborhoods that have experienced high levels of demolitions have actually become more racially segregated, less educated, and poorer.<sup>75</sup>

The results of Hackworth's study have immediate relevance as applied to Project C.O.R.E. in Baltimore. The majority of Project C.O.R.E. demolitions are being executed in areas that, based on the city's 2014 Housing Market Typology Map are distressed housing markets. The Housing Market Typology Map was designed to help buyers looking for property in Baltimore City to understand where the most desirable neighborhoods are (Figure 3.2). Neighborhoods with significant vacancy rates are categorized as "Middle Market Stressed" or "Stressed." While it is unknown whether Sandtown-Winchester fits the criteria of an EHLN, it has had a significant amount of housing demolition since 1970, something that will only increase through Project C.O.R.E. The fact that demolition has led to an increase in vacancy rates in EHL neighborhoods suggests that demolition has a destabilizing effect in distressed neighborhoods. Project C.O.R.E. demolitions are likely to have a similar effect on neighborhoods that are already struggling with high vacancy rates.

---

<sup>75</sup> Hackworth, "Demolition as urban policy in the American rust belt," 2214-2215.



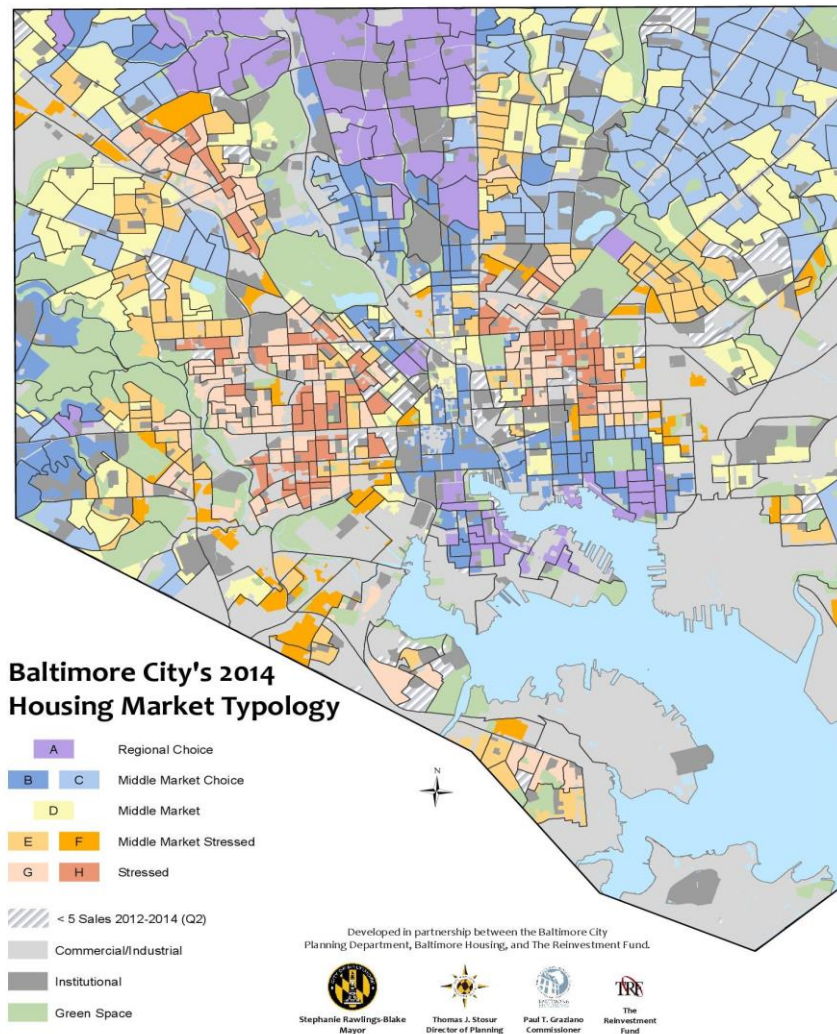


Figure 3.2. Baltimore City’s 2014 Housing Market Typology Map. The majority of “Middle Market Stressed” and “Stressed” neighborhoods are located on the east and west sides of the city. From Baltimore Housing, 2014.

The most significant conclusion of Hackworth’s study is that contrary to popular planning rhetoric, in neighborhoods most affected by widespread demolition policies, the housing markets have not stabilized, and these communities have become more, not less socially isolated than they were in 1970. These facts illustrate that while rightsizing has removed visual signs of urban decline and abandonment, it has not removed the social and economic problems of shrinking neighborhoods. Hackworth’s

study empirically proves some of the concerns previously expressed by scholars and other observers.

Another problem with rightsizing planning is that it is not an equitable solution. This critique is explored by Schilling and Logan in “The bounds of smart decline,” where they raise serious questions about the lack of justice in rightsizing. They note that areas with the highest vacancy rates tend to be predominately minority, low-income neighborhood, and that many of these places still bear the marks of past urban renewal efforts. “Any rightsizing strategy raises issues of social equity, as residents in neighborhoods with high concentrations of vacant properties are often predominantly low-income and people of color.”<sup>76</sup> Based on these realities, rightsizing planning efforts should be balanced with the long-term goals and needs of the communities they will impact. They insist that residents must be involved in any plans for relocation, which they deem to be inevitable for declining neighborhoods.<sup>77</sup>

Brent D. Ryan critiques rightsizing from the perspective of what it fails to do for the communities impacted by the policy. While large numbers of people had left shrinking cities that were subsequently affected by rightsizing policies, substantial numbers of people remained in neighborhoods scattered across these cities. These remaining residents live in increasingly isolated, impoverished neighborhoods, and blight removal has not done anything to improve their circumstances. Widespread demolition has not “deliver[ed] prosperity” to cities.<sup>78</sup> The majority of shrinking cities,

---

<sup>76</sup> Schilling and Logan, “Greening the Rust Belt,” 453.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 453.

<sup>78</sup> Ryan, *Design After Decline*, 185.

such as Detroit and Buffalo, remain as poor in 2000 as they were in 1970.<sup>79</sup> These, and cities like them, now have more vacant land and fewer people, but the land is no more productive than it was when it had vacant building.<sup>80</sup>

Research suggests that rightsizing policy is far from the ideal solution for shrinking cities. Instead of saving cities or revitalizing communities, rightsizing policies have a serious negative impact on already vulnerable neighborhoods. While practitioners declare with pride the number of vacant properties they have demolished, neighborhoods with stressed housing markets become more socially isolated, impoverished, and hyper-segregated. The failure of practitioners and city officials to make distressed neighborhoods a key consideration in rightsizing planning has turned out to be their biggest folly.

### ***Preservation Involvement in Rightsizing***

As rightsizing spread across the country, historic preservation professionals and advocates became increasingly concerned about what effect this policy might have on historic resources. Instead of opposing rightsizing policies on principle, however, some preservationists have approached the issue by acknowledging that not every building can be saved. In response, two major organizations have been created to both to educate rightsizing proponents on preservation issues, as well as to consult planning agencies on how to best address historic resources in rightsizing strategies.

---

<sup>79</sup> Ryan, *Design After Decline*, 185.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 186.

The Preservation Rightsizing Network is one of these initiatives. Founded in 2013 by Cara Bertron, this organization brings together historic preservation professionals, planners, community development organizations, and others in order to address how to “create more livable communities and lay a foundation for the revitalization of older and historic cities and neighborhoods.”<sup>81</sup> The Rightsizing Network lists a number of principles that guide the work that they do, chief among them being engaging in planning processes, advocating for the preservation of older, historic neighborhoods in legacy cities, engaging community residents, and promoting equity and social justice.<sup>82</sup> The organization is run by a six-person, rotating volunteer leadership board of preservation planning professionals and advocates. In pursuit of its goals, the organization seeks to connect practitioners, planners and others to share relevant research and best practices, provide a forum to discuss challenges and opportunities, and promote tools and mechanisms with which to execute the work of preservation in legacy cities.<sup>83</sup>

The Rightsizing Network created the “Action Agenda for Historic Preservation in Legacy Cities,” a document that was the result of a roundtable discussion at the Legacy Cities Conference held in Cleveland, Ohio in June 2014.<sup>84</sup> The Agenda includes three main ideas, including shaping a new approach to preservation in legacy

---

<sup>81</sup> “Mission and Goals,” *Preservation Rightsizing Network*, accessed February 7, 2017, <https://rightsizeplace.org/about/mission-and-goals/>.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> “Action Agenda for Historic Preservation in Legacy Cities,” *Preservation Rightsizing Network*, 3, <http://rightsizeplace.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/ActionAgenda.pdf>.

cities, adapting preservation tools and policies to meet the needs of legacy cities, and supporting place-based collaboration. The majority of the report's recommendations focus on creating ways for practitioners in legacy cities to communicate about best practices and tools. Their policy recommendations include using data to improve rightsizing practices, creating a "toolkit" for preservation in legacy cities, and developing new financing methods for building rehabilitation.<sup>85</sup> While for each recommendation the authors of the report make suggestions for next steps, they fail to provide a framework that describes how to actually achieve the described goals.

It is difficult to measure the impact that the Preservation Rightsizing Network has had on rightsizing policies across the country, Bertron has made some assessments herself of the extent to which cities are incorporating preservation as part of their plans. In her 2013 piece titled "Rightsizing Right" in *Forum Journal* published by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, she notes that historic preservation is often "plays a small and isolated role" in municipal plans and conferences focused on rightsizing.<sup>86</sup> A year later in a talk given at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia Bertron notes that in the 20 cities with the highest population loss between 1960 and 2000 that were surveyed to determine how rightsizing was preceding, preservation once again played a "negligible" role.<sup>87</sup> Bertron continually reiterates the need for

---

<sup>85</sup> "Action Agenda for Historic Preservation in Legacy Cities," *Preservation Rightsizing Network*, <http://rightsizeplace.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/ActionAgenda.pdf>.

<sup>86</sup> Cara Bertron, "Rightsizing Right," *Forum Journal*, Summer 2013, 25.

<sup>87</sup> Cara Bertron, "Right Size, Right Place: A New Role for Preservation," *Place Economics*, February 12, 2014, accessed February 12, 2017, [http://www.placeeconomics.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/bertron\\_gray-area-talk\\_feb-2014.pdf](http://www.placeeconomics.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/bertron_gray-area-talk_feb-2014.pdf).

preservation to become a more central concern in rightsizing planning, but making that a reality has been a challenge.

Another preservation organization engaged with rightsizing planning is Place Economics, a Washington D.C. based consulting firm led by Donovan Rypkema. Members of the firm consult on issues related to real estate and economic development, and also analyze the economic impact of historic preservation. One of the branches of their services is their Rightsizing Cities Initiative. The Initiative was started to create strategies to strengthen neighborhoods engaged in rightsizing policies and planning. Bertron was one of the first directors of this program that is now run by Emilie Evans. Evans, as mentioned earlier, was in charge of a project to survey of 18,000 properties in Detroit in response to rightsizing initiatives there. She also serves as the Secretary of the Preservation Rightsizing Network.<sup>88</sup>

In September 2013, the Rightsizing Cities Initiative launched their ReLocal Pilot Project in Muncie, Indiana. ReLocal is a tool that the Initiative created to “provide a data-based framework for tackling vacant and abandoned properties.”<sup>89</sup> The ReLocal tool uses eight different categories of neighborhood strengths and challenges in order to help municipalities make decisions about how to proceed with rightsizing initiatives in different areas of the city. The eight categories are as follows:

---

<sup>88</sup> “About Us-Emilie Evans,” *Place Economics*, accessed April 12, 2017, <http://www.placeeconomics.com/about-us/>.

<sup>89</sup> “Stronger Neighborhoods Through Strategic Decisions: ReLocal Pilot Project,” *PlaceEconomics*, 2013, 1.

<b>ReLocal Category</b>	<b>What it Measures</b>
Real Estate	<i>Past disinvestment and prospective reinvestment</i>
Stability	<i>Population trends and related quality-of-life issues</i>
Neighborhood character	<i>Sense of place through the built environment</i>
Walkability	<i>Proximity to community assets and condition of bike-ped infrastructure</i>
Fiscal	<i>Economic costs and contributions of neighborhood elements to City</i>
Economic Opportunity	<i>Wealth-generating opportunities for residents</i>
Engagement	<i>Resident participation in neighborhood</i>
Environment	<i>Past land uses, natural resources, and current quality-of-life factors</i>

90

These metrics were applied to five neighborhoods in Muncie. For each metric the neighborhood received a rating of above average, average, or below average. Based on these results, recommendations were made for the future of each neighborhood. The main points of the results are to make suggestions about how to proceed with planning for residential neighborhoods. For example, in Industry, an historically working-class neighborhood, homesteading or other low-density uses were suggested because the area has experienced major population loss. East Central, however, was described as having stabilizing potential because of the “high architectural character, well-maintained buildings, community amenities, and an active neighborhood association.”<sup>91</sup> The ReLocal tool is designed to provide a variety of

---

<sup>90</sup> “Stronger Neighborhoods Through Strategic Decisions: ReLocal Pilot Project,” *PlaceEconomics*, 2013, 1.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

recommendations at the parcel level in each neighborhood.<sup>92</sup> The idea behind this is that it allows local officials to then make decisions about which strategies to employ based on funding and other factors related to citywide planning.

Five neighborhoods were evaluated in the report, one of which served as the benchmark neighborhood by which to evaluate the others. At the end of the report, the authors suggest strategies for vacant properties. In areas with the “highest priority for retention,” the authors recommend stabilizing and rehabilitating properties and conveying them to development corporations. In “low priority for retention” areas, it is suggested that vacant properties are demolished and that land is either returned to natural landscape, held for future decision, repurposed for community use, or re-conveyed to neighboring property owners as a side lot. The authors note that these strategies should be implemented as a part of strategic city and neighborhood planning. Since this report was released, the ReLocal tool has been utilized in other cities including Little Rock, Arkansas, and the Walnut Hills neighborhood in Cincinnati, Ohio.

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) has also commented on rightsizing policies. The Advisory Council is an independent federal agency that “promotes the preservation, enhancement, and sustainable use of our nation’s diverse historic resources, and advises the President and the Congress on national historic preservation policy.”<sup>93</sup> In 2011 the Council created the Rightsizing Task Force to

---

<sup>92</sup> “Stronger Neighborhoods Through Strategic Decisions: ReLocal Pilot Project,” *PlaceEconomics*, 2013, 3.

<sup>93</sup> “Advisory Council on Historic Preservation,” USA.gov, accessed March 21, 2017, <http://www.achp.gov/>.



investigate policy needs as related to historic preservation in community renewal, “provide best practices” to federal, state, and local agencies, and to advocate for historic properties in the planning process.<sup>94</sup> In order to study rightsizing, the Advisory Council enlisted the assistance of PlaceEconomics which developed a survey for them, and sent the Task Force on site visits to gather data in five legacy cities determined to be a representative sample group: Detroit, Michigan; Saginaw, Michigan; Buffalo, New York; Cleveland, Ohio; and Newark, New Jersey.<sup>95</sup>

This research culminated in the report “Managing Change: Preservation and Rightsizing in America,” released in 2014 to comment on the current role of historic preservation in rightsizing planning and to make suggestions for how preservation can be better integrated into these conversations. The authors of the report acknowledge that “the rightsizing process poses serious threats to the nation’s historic urban fabric.”<sup>96</sup> Noting that discussions regarding how to plan for shrinking cities should not disregard the fact that preservation is a powerful tool for revitalization, the report looks specifically at how preservation tools can assist in rightsizing. It also reviews federal funding for rightsizing, reviews federal policies that support rightsizing, examines how to improve federal program coordination, and describes how to use federal funding for local preservation efforts.

---

<sup>94</sup> “Managing Change: Rightsizing and Preservation in America” *The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation*, 2014, accessed March 19, 2017, ii, [https://www.novoco.com/sites/default/files/atoms/files/achp\\_rightsizing\\_report\\_030514.pdf](https://www.novoco.com/sites/default/files/atoms/files/achp_rightsizing_report_030514.pdf).

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, vi.

The authors of the report arrive at four main goals based on their findings, and include suggestions for achieving each. The first goal is to make tools used to support historic preservation available to municipalities that are developing and implementing rightsizing strategies. To support this goal two of their suggestions are encouraging collaboration between national preservation organizations to find the best ways to promote the Federal Historic Tax Credit, expand of the Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Incentive Program to apply to owner-occupied structures.<sup>97</sup>

Their next goal is “to better use federal resources and processes to pursue preservation-based strategies to address rightsizing in legacy cities.”<sup>98</sup> To achieve this goal they propose Housing and Urban Development should educate local administrators on best practices for reusing vacant properties, and that the ACHP should develop web-based platforms for publicizing best practices for using federal historic preservation programs in rightsizing planning.<sup>99</sup> Their next goal is to support collaboration between federal, state, and local agencies so that funding for rightsizing policies can be more holistic, considering historic preservation as an option and opportunity. To achieve this goal they suggest that ACHP promotes greater understanding of preservation strategies at the federal and local levels.<sup>100</sup> Finally, they propose that “communities to work with multiple partners to resolve the impacts of

---

<sup>97</sup> “Managing Change: Rightsizing and Preservation in America” *The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation*, 2014, accessed March 19, 2017, 21, [https://www.novoco.com/sites/default/files/atoms/files/achp\\_rightsizing\\_report\\_030514.pdf](https://www.novoco.com/sites/default/files/atoms/files/achp_rightsizing_report_030514.pdf).

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

rightsizing, including local institutions and national foundations and businesses.”<sup>101</sup>

For this they suggest that the National Trust for Historic Preservation host a blog that documents the impact of rightsizing on historic resources in order to broaden the array of stakeholders who have access to such information.<sup>102</sup>

The report from the ACHP requires numerous collaborative public-private partnerships in order to create a larger exchange between communities, planners, and preservationists. All of their goals are grounded in greater education and data sharing about rightsizing and its impact on historic resources. They also advocate for more channels through which to share this information. Ultimately the ACHP wants rightsizing policies nationwide to be better-informed, more comprehensive, and more sensitive to their impact on historic resources.

Preservation and rightsizing are inherently contradictory practices that have entirely different goals. Preservation seeks to conserve historic resources for these reasons. Rightsizing planning, on the other hand nearly always includes widespread demolition as one of the means to achieve its goal. The involvement of preservationists in rightsizing planning seems like an important and positive step for the field in order to ensure the protection of historic resources. The reality is though that preservation involvement in rightsizing has not only not made a negligible difference in rightsizing planning in cities, it has tarnished the principles that preservationists hold dear.

---

<sup>101</sup> Managing Change: Rightsizing and Preservation in America” *The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation*, 2014, accessed March 19, 2017, 47, [https://www.novoco.com/sites/default/files/atoms/files/achp\\_rightsizing\\_report\\_030514.pdf](https://www.novoco.com/sites/default/files/atoms/files/achp_rightsizing_report_030514.pdf).

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

## ***Conclusion***

Rightsizing has emerged within the past ten years as one prominent strategy of urban policy makers in shrinking cities. A concept that arose from theorists examining the state of cities in the late 1970 and early 1980s, rightsizing seeks to boost the economy of cities by shrinking the size of their footprints via the built environment. However, rightsizing policy making in the United States thus far has done little to consider its impact on historic resources, and has done virtually nothing to mitigate the effects it will have on predominately low-income minority neighborhoods. These areas, which are becoming more socially isolated and disenfranchised are the losers in the zero-sum game of rightsizing policy.

CHAPTER FOUR

RIGHTSIZING GETS IT WRONG:

AN EVALUATION OF PROJECT C.O.R.E. AND ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS  
FOR VACANT PROPERTIES IN SANDTOWN-WINCHESTER

On January 5, 2016 Maryland Governor Larry Hogan and Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake announced Project C.O.R.E., a multimillion dollar investment to demolish 4,000 vacant properties over the course of four years. The project was announced in front of a block of vacant properties in Sandtown-Winchester, a symbolic move meant to suggest that city officials were paying attention to the neighborhood again.<sup>1</sup> Project C.O.R.E. is being executed in two phases. Phase I of the project, which has already begun, is the demolition phase. It is funded through \$75 million investment from the state, and \$18.5 million from Baltimore City. The Maryland Stadium Authority is the manager of the project, and the Department of Housing is responsible for identifying properties to demolish. Phase II, “Revitalization Through Redevelopment,” involves the state extracting \$600 million from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development programs towards new investment in communities affected by Phase I demolitions.<sup>2</sup>

In March 2016, Baltimore Housing and the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development published their demolition plans for the year. They

---

<sup>1</sup> Luke Broadwater and Yvonne Wenger, “Gov. Hogan announces \$700M plan to target urban decay in Baltimore,” *Baltimore Sun*, January 5, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> “Four Year Plan,” *Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development*, <http://dhcd.maryland.gov/ProjectCORE/Pages/Plan.aspx>.

included seventy-five demolition clusters across twenty-nine neighborhoods. Each cluster ranged from two to twenty-three buildings, bringing the first phase total to 468 structures to be demolished. Sandtown-Winchester was one of four neighborhoods that had five or more demolition clusters. About half of all the demolition clusters were within National Register Historic Districts, including Old West Baltimore.<sup>3</sup> The current Project C.O.R.E. map for 2017 identifies thirteen demolition clusters in Sandtown adding up to thirty-five different parcels where a demolition will occur. The majority of these properties are located in the southeast portion of the neighborhood on North Arlington and North Stockton close to the Upton and Harlem Park neighborhoods.<sup>4</sup>

The purpose of this chapter is to explain more innovative and appropriate solutions that can be used to address Sandtown's vacancy problem. This chapter is divided into three main sections. The first is an examination of the history of vacant building programs administered by the City of Baltimore over the past forty years. Part two is a discussion of why Project C.O.R.E. will have a negative impact on Sandtown-Winchester. Part three proposes alternative solutions to the neighborhood's vacant building problem.

---

<sup>3</sup> Eli Pousson, "What does Project CORE mean for Baltimore's historic neighborhoods," *Baltimore Heritage*, April 19, 2016, <https://baltimoreheritage.org/preservation/project-core-mean-baltimores-historic-neighborhoods/#.WJ3yfhIrIxc>.

<sup>4</sup> "Project C.O.R.E." *Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development*, [http://www.dhcd.state.md.us/GIS/Project\\_CORE\\_v2/index.html](http://www.dhcd.state.md.us/GIS/Project_CORE_v2/index.html).

### ***Review of Baltimore Citywide Vacant Building Strategies 1960-2016***

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, as the city faced the problems of having a declining population and increasing vacancy rates, the work of rehabilitating vacant properties fell on individuals doing the work of informal preservation. One such individual was Jane Springer, a member of the Preservation Society of Fell's Point and Federal Hill board of directors who rehabilitated an 1802 rowhouse in the Federal Hill neighborhood in 1974.<sup>5</sup> Some of these efforts were made possible through city or federal urban renewal funds, while others were the work of developers or individuals such as Springer who took on rehabilitation projects individually. The historic building stock left largely intact in inner-city neighborhoods was one of the compelling reasons for early members of the "back to the city" movement in the late 1970s to move into these places.<sup>6</sup>

In 1973 Mayor William D. Schaefer started a city-assisted housing program known as urban homesteading, a concept first introduced in Philadelphia in 1968 by city council member Joseph E. Coleman.<sup>7</sup> Through this program, buyers could purchase a house for one dollar, and the city provided up to \$37,000 in low-interest construction loans. Created as an alternative to urban renewal demolition programs,

---

<sup>5</sup> Helen Henry, "Transformed, a 14-foot wide rowhouse," *Baltimore Sun*, March 10, 1974.

<sup>6</sup> See Shirley Bradway Laska and Daphne Spain, "Urban Policy and Planning in the Wake of Gentrification Anticipating Renovators' Demands," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 45, no. 4 (1979): 523-531.

<sup>7</sup> Michael A. Tomlan, *Historic Preservation: Caring for our Expanding Legacy*, (New York: Springer International Publishing, 2015), 72.

homesteading returned 600 properties to use over the course of a ten-year period. The first homesteading project took place in what was then one of the city's poorest neighborhoods—Oldtown in East Baltimore. The city connected buyers with contractors, and required that all major work be completed within the span of six months. This experiment in urban housing ended up saving hundreds of properties in neighborhoods across the city from demolition, and revitalized some areas that were declining.<sup>8</sup>

By 1980 the city could no longer afford to subsidize construction loans for homesteaders in large part because of federal budget cuts. As an alternative to homesteading, in 1982 the city launched a new program called Rehab Express. Under this program the city sold vacant properties for between \$100 and \$200, and left the responsibility of financing the rehabilitation projects to the owners. Around 300 people participated in this program, but in part due to lack of financial assistance, only 64 people were able to complete work on their houses.<sup>9</sup>

Citywide demolition policies as the solution to managing excesses of vacant properties began in 1993 when Mayor Kurt Schmoke pledged to either rehabilitate or tear down 600 vacant buildings in Sandtown-Winchester. Then Housing Commissioner Daniel P. Henson III justified the strategy by saying “What I’m hearing from the communities is, if they’re given two short-term options—a vacant house or a

---

<sup>8</sup> Michael Decourcy Hinds, “Baltimore’s Story of City Homesteading,” *New York Times*, January 16, 1986, <http://www.nytimes.com/1986/01/16/garden/baltimore-s-story-of-city-homestaeding.html?pagewanted=all>.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.



vacant lot,—they’ll take the latter every day...When I lay out the criteria and ask them to work with us on a selective demolition plan, they’re saying, ‘It’s like you’re throwing us a lifeline.’”<sup>10</sup> In the end the city demolished 2,500 properties, but was criticized for the strategies it employed including mid-block demolition and destroying dilapidated public housing without replacing any of the units.<sup>11</sup>

In response to citizen feedback, in 1999 the Baltimore City Council passed an ordinance to limit the number of demolitions. Since demolition had become so rampant in the 1990s, residents began complaining about the poor communication between the city and the neighborhoods regarding when demolitions were to occur. Some said they would wake up to the sound of bulldozers with demolition crews on their street without any advance notice. They were also upset with the number of public housing units that were being torn down when at the time demand for public housing was high.<sup>12</sup>

Mayor Martin O’Malley announced an initiative called “Project 5000,” in 2002. The program was designed to help the city acquire 5,000 vacant properties in two years. O’Malley described these properties as “dead capital,” and argued that the city should acquire these structures from absentee owners. O’Malley argued that after

---

<sup>10</sup> Eli Pousson, “Baltimore’s Vacant Housing: A Short History of Demolition Policy,” accessed February 3, 2017, [https://cdn.knightlab.com/libs/timeline3/latest/embed/index.html?source=1iJlcj8-9zR4Q3v8FcG4tUB9xqwHzbJaEpkydnNe3WM&font=Default&lang=en&initial\\_zoom=2&height=650](https://cdn.knightlab.com/libs/timeline3/latest/embed/index.html?source=1iJlcj8-9zR4Q3v8FcG4tUB9xqwHzbJaEpkydnNe3WM&font=Default&lang=en&initial_zoom=2&height=650).

<sup>11</sup> Natalie Sherman, “New Program aimed at old Baltimore vacants problem gets slow start,” *Baltimore Sun*, September 24, 2016.

<sup>12</sup> Gerard Shields, “City seeks to raze repaired housing,” *Baltimore Sun*, November 6, 1998.

the city owned these properties, the government would be able to guide their future, whether that would end up being through resale, demolition, or development.<sup>13</sup>

The city developed several several different property information management tools to support this process. These included a repository of property-based information, HousingView, an internal web visualization tool to answer property inquiries, tracking systems of legal procedures regarding properties, and a complaint tracking system.<sup>14</sup> These processes also helped to support the property disposition system that allowed the city to sell properties to be reused.

One such property disposition method was Project Selling City Owned Properties Efficiently, or Project SCOPE. Created through a collaboration between the Baltimore Efficiency and Economy Foundation (BEEF), and the Greater Baltimore Board of Realtors (GBBR) the initiative gave real estate agents the license to sell city-owned properties that were taken from absentee landlords.<sup>15</sup> The goal of the project was to streamline the process of buying city-owned vacant structures.<sup>16</sup> The difference between this program and Project 5000 was that SCOPE was intended to benefit properties and neighborhoods in which the real estate market was still thriving.

---

<sup>13</sup> Gerard Shields, "City seeks to raze repaired housing," *Baltimore Sun*, November 6, 1998.

<sup>14</sup> William Ballard and G. Thomas Kingsley, "Systems to Improve the Management of city-owned land in Baltimore," *Urban Institute and Location Age*, 2007, 6, <http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/alfresco/publication-pdfs/411866-Systems-to-Improve-the-Management-of-City-Owned-Land-in-Baltimore.PDF>.

<sup>15</sup> Jen DeGregorio, "Some claim Baltimore's SCOPE program not living up to promise," *Daily Record* (Baltimore, MD), November 8, 2005.

<sup>16</sup> "Economic Impact of Project SCOPE," *Urban Information Associates Inc.*, June 2006, 2, [http://www.beefbaltimore.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/BEEF\\_SCOPE\\_ImpactReport\\_2006.pdf](http://www.beefbaltimore.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/BEEF_SCOPE_ImpactReport_2006.pdf).

Project SCOPE fell short of expectations. Over the course of eight years, only 130 properties were rehabilitated.<sup>17</sup> The project took nearly three years to get started, and once it did, buyers had to wait 180 days to purchase a property.<sup>18</sup> Some of those who did purchase a property through SCOPE found the 18-month deadline for completing renovation work on a building restrictive, and for some impossible to meet.<sup>19</sup> While property tax revenues from SCOPE-sold properties did rise over the course of the program, these revenues took a large hit after the housing bubble burst.<sup>20</sup>

In 2007 Mayor Sheila Dixon called for the creation of a citywide land bank. A strategy that had already been employed in places such as Flint, Michigan, this was seen as a less controversial strategy than SCOPE and Project 5000, both of which had been met with harsh criticism because of who they were designed to benefit, and how the process for each had stalled. One of the reasons that the land bank was never introduced to city council, however, was that the scheme Dixon had in mind indicated the sale of land would not go through approval by the Board of Estimates, making the process a less transparent way to manage land. Another issue was that some council members felt as though they would no longer have the same authority over their own

---

<sup>17</sup> Andrew Zaleski, "Build it back: inside Baltimore's quest to rehab blocks of vacant housing," *Curbed*, November 30, 2016, <http://www.curbed.com/2016/11/30/13769138/baltimore-vacants-to-value>.

<sup>18</sup> "House by House," *Baltimore Sun*, March 14, 2005.

<sup>19</sup> Eric Siegel, "Slow pace of renovations hurts house-selling program," *Baltimore Sun*, October 19, 2006.

<sup>20</sup> "Economic Impact of Project SCOPE," *Urban Information Associates Inc.*, June 2006, 15, [http://www.beefbaltimore.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/BEEF\\_SCOPE\\_ImpactReport\\_2006.pdf](http://www.beefbaltimore.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/BEEF_SCOPE_ImpactReport_2006.pdf).

districts.<sup>21</sup> Dixon left office before finding a way to successfully implement these ideas, and the scheme lost support.

The most recent vacant building initiative is Vacants to Value. Launched by Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake in 2010, this program was intended to streamline the process of selling vacant city property, and provide incentives for homebuyers and developers to invest. The project targeted vacant buildings in the city's middle-market neighborhoods based on Baltimore's 2014 Housing Market Typology Map (Figure 3.2). One of the goals of the program was to create a system that made it possible for the city to identify and contact property owners of dilapidated structures in neighborhoods with declining property values.<sup>22</sup> The focus of the investment in neighborhoods with stressed housing markets was to either find developers to rehabilitate whole blocks, or to raze entire blocks that were deemed to not be candidates for new investment.

This program has been successful at spurring revitalization in some neighborhoods that have declining housing markets. In the Oliver neighborhood on the east side of the city, and the Greenmount West neighborhood north of downtown, dozens of vacant rowhouses have been rehabilitated and sold.<sup>23</sup> Another success of the program has been an increase in receivership, one of several tools for managing vacant

---

<sup>21</sup> Andrew Thompson, "What Philly should have learned from Baltimore about land banks," *Philadelphia Magazine*, December 11, 2013, <http://www.phillymag.com/news/2013/12/11/darrell-clarke-baltimore-land-bank/>.

<sup>22</sup> Joan Jacobson, "Vacants to Value: Baltimore's bold blight-elimination effort is making modest progress despite limited renovation funds and questionable accounting," *The Abell Report* 28, no. 5 (2015): 2-3.

<sup>23</sup> Carrie Wells, "Five years in, Vacants to Value shows mixed results," *Baltimore Sun*, November 12, 2015.

properties. Through receivership, the city asks the court to seize property from absentee property owners, and in turn gives the property to a non-profit organization that then sells it at auction. Through Vacants to Value, 448 properties had either been rehabilitated through receivership or restored by property owners worried about the threat of receivership by 2015.<sup>24</sup> The city has received awards for the program, including an Honorable Mention at the 2011 U.S. Conference of Mayors' for City Livability, and the Clinton Global Initiative Commitment to Action award for demolishing and rehabilitating 3,000 properties over three years.<sup>25</sup>

Vacants to Value, like the programs that have preceded it, has had its shortcomings. The program, while primarily focused on the rehabilitation of vacant properties, has also included "blight elimination" through significant demolition. Over the course of the program, however, Baltimore City ended up with more vacant properties than when Rawlings-Blake's tenure began.<sup>26</sup> This illustrates that neither the accelerated demolition nor rehabilitation programs have kept up with the pace that properties become vacant. Some property owners have claimed that the city has used heavy-handed tactics to seize properties, including designating buildings undergoing renovation as vacant. Leonard Abreu was completing renovation work on his house in the neighborhood of Canton, when the city seized his property, claiming that it was operating as an open-air drug market. Dozens have echoed the sentiment that the

---

<sup>24</sup> Carrie Wells, "Five years in, Vacants to Value shows mixed results," *Baltimore Sun*, November 12, 2015.

<sup>25</sup> "V2V Recognition and Awards," *Baltimore Housing*, accessed January 19, 2017, <http://www.vacantstovalue.org/Awards.aspx>.

<sup>26</sup> "The value of vacants," *Baltimore Sun*, November 12, 2015.

combination of the city's short time frame for code compliance and its tactics of seizing property from owners have resulted in residents unfairly losing properties. City Housing Assistant Commissioner Jason Hessler has admitted that the city has been aggressive on tracking down vacant properties, but has also noted that they "expect people to take care of their properties."<sup>27</sup> Another criticism of the project was that it neglected buildings in predominately African-American neighborhoods of the city.<sup>28</sup>

The city has not been transparent in reporting data from Vacants to Value, which has made it difficult to evaluate the success of the program. In a report published by the Abell Foundation, researchers found large discrepancies between the number of purchases and renovations listed as a result of the program, and what the results have actually been. Although the city claimed that the program led to the completion of 1,585 projects in its first four years, the Abell Foundation found that 416 of those properties received building permits before the program began.<sup>29</sup> They also discovered that almost 300 houses listed as part of the program were actually properties purchased by investors on the private market.<sup>30</sup> The amount of self-inflation in Vacants to Values makes it more difficult to evaluate how many properties it actually affected.

---

<sup>27</sup> Barry Simms, "Property owners battle city over Vacants to Value," *WBAL*, February 29, 2016, <http://www.wbaltv.com/article/property-owners-battle-city-over-vacants-to-value/7099211>.

<sup>28</sup> Natalie Sherman, "New Program aimed at old Baltimore vacants problem gets slow start," *Baltimore Sun*, September 24, 2016.

<sup>29</sup> Joan Jacobson, "Vacants to Value: Baltimore's bold blight-elimination effort is making modest progress despite limited renovation funds and questionable accounting," *The Abell Report* 28, no. 5 (2015): 12.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

Another criticism of the program is that it was designed to benefit specific areas of the city, and did not include some of the neighborhood with the most need. Vacants to Value was specifically designed to benefit middle housing markets, and did not incentivize the purchase of vacant properties in neighborhoods with distressed housing markets. City council member Bill Henry described Vacants to Value as a “cherry picker,” noting “it’s deliberately identifying those vacant houses of having the best chance of getting back onto the tax roll.”<sup>31</sup> The program excluded 12,000 vacant properties that exist in the most distressed housing markets in the city.<sup>32</sup> In neighborhoods such as Sandtown demolition was an option that took money away from potential rehabbers by diverting thousands of dollars to demolition.

In September 2016, Vacants to Value exhausted its grant funding only two months into the fiscal year. The grant fund suffered from drastic cuts in the latest city budget.<sup>33</sup> In past years the Baltimore Homeownership Incentive Program had an annual budget of \$3.3 million. When cuts were made, the program only received \$2.1 million, bringing funding for Vacants to Value \$300,000. This meant that the program could only administer thirty grants for the fiscal year. The impact of this is that not as many people will be able to purchase a house through the program since many use the

---

<sup>31</sup> Andrew Zaleski, “Build it back: Inside Baltimore’s quest to rehab blocks of vacant housing,” *Curbed*, November 30, 2016, accessed January 6, 2017, <http://www.curbed.com/2016/11/30/13769138/baltimore-vacants-to-value>.

<sup>32</sup> Joan Jacobson, “Vacants to Value: Baltimore’s bold blight-elimination effort is making modest progress despite limited renovation funds and questionable accounting,” *The Abell Report* 28, no. 5 (2015): 3.

<sup>33</sup> Melody Simmons, “Baltimore runs out of dollars for mayor’s Vacants to Value homebuyers’ incentive fund,” *Baltimore Business Journal*, September 1, 2016.

funds for down payments and closing costs.<sup>34</sup> The rate at which the funding ran out indicates that there is a strong desire for vacant properties in certain areas of the city.

The introduction of Project C.O.R.E. represents the shift from demolition being *in* urban policy to demolition *being* urban policy in Baltimore.<sup>35</sup> The stated goals of Project C.O.R.E. are “to support community growth in Baltimore City, to eliminate in a strategic manner as many full blocks of blight as possible, and to encourage investment in Project C.O.R.E. communities through attractive financing and other incentives.”<sup>36</sup> Creators of the initiative claim that they will include community engagement, workforce development, and historic preservation as part of the strategy and execution of the work. The state also claims that the initiative will engage communities in the planning process to discuss workforce training opportunities, analyze lots and blocks, and mitigating adverse impacts.<sup>37</sup>

Although Project C.O.R.E. was advertised as though it would have an immediate impact on the city’s vacant housing stock, the program has gotten off to a slow start. Nine months following the announcement, only 53 of the over 370 properties identified for demolition had been approved to tear down. One of the reasons for the slow start to the program is that the city was trying to prevent repeating

---

<sup>34</sup> Melody Simmons, “Baltimore runs out of dollars for mayor’s Vacants to Value homebuyers’ incentive fund,” *Baltimore Business Journal*, September 1, 2016.

<sup>35</sup> Jason Hackworth, “Demolition as urban policy in the American rust belt,” *Environment and Planning A*, 48, no. 11 (2016): 2201–2222.

<sup>36</sup> “About Project C.O.R.E.,” *Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development*, accessed January 22, 2017, <http://dhcd.maryland.gov/ProjectCORE/Pages/About.aspx>.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*



demolition errors of the past, such as mid-block demolition.<sup>38</sup> Officials claim that they have been examining best practices for demolishing vacant properties, and looking at ways to mitigate negative effects of demolition. One of the mitigation efforts has been to reduce dust pollution post-demolition by wetting the site and filling it with clean fill. City administrators have also worked to do a better job at notifying neighbors of what is going to take place, and salvaging components of the structure that can be reused.<sup>39</sup>

These mitigation efforts have escalated the cost of demolitions, however, forcing the city to continually reevaluate the scope of the project. For the first twenty-seven properties that began to be examined in September of 2016, the Maryland Stadium Authority, one of the partners of the project, agreed to pay \$883,000 for demolition costs, which comes to approximately \$33,000 per vacant property. This overshoots the average cost of demolishing similar properties by \$11,000.<sup>40</sup>

As Project C.O.R.E. continues under the new mayoral administration of Catherine Pugh, it will likely fall short of expectations, not unlike several previous demolition and redevelopment initiatives. A major tenant of the project is to demolish properties in large enough swaths that the land that is left behind can be redeveloped either as green space or through new construction. However, it remains to be seen whether anything will be done with these lots. Another important question is, if these

---

<sup>38</sup> Gerard Shields, "Councilman seeks halt to housing demolition," *Baltimore Sun*, September 29, 1999.

<sup>39</sup> Natalie Sherman, "New Program aimed at old Baltimore vacants problem gets slow start," *Baltimore Sun*, September 24, 2016.

<sup>40</sup> Natalie Sherman, "Vacants remain a drag on the city," *Baltimore Sun*, September 25, 2016.

lots are redeveloped, will state money that is supposed to be dedicated to existing programs such as low-income housing tax credits be made available to redevelopment projects.

Reaction to Project C.O.R.E. has been decidedly mixed. Some, including neighborhood residents, have been enthusiastic about ‘blight removal’ because they do not like living in an area with blocks full of vacant properties. Director of the Institute for Urban Research at Morgan State University Raymond Winbush questioned what kinds of development would eventually come from the project, echoing concerns from some city residents that widespread clearance would lead to gentrification. Mark Parker, pastor of Breath of God Lutheran Church in the southeast neighborhood of Highlandtown reacted with skepticism, noting that “Yes, we need to deal with vacant properties, but blighted properties don’t cause the deterioration of the neighborhood.”<sup>41</sup> For Deborah Sherman, who grew up on North Chester Street, seeing the house she grew up in be demolished was bittersweet. Despite the sorrow of seeing a place so important to her disappear, she expressed optimism about Project C.O.R.E., remarking “This neighborhood will be revitalized like it was when I was growing up and even better. That’s my hope...and that’s my prayer.”<sup>42</sup> Some West Baltimore residents have also expressed the concern that while they want development, they are not receiving it in the way they had hoped. This is summed up by Eli Pousson,

---

<sup>41</sup> Fern Shen, “Smashing Sandtown-Winchester to save it?” *Baltimore Brew*, January 6, 2016, accessed March 27, 2017, <https://www.baltimorebrew.com/2016/01/06/smashing-sandtown-winchester-to-save-it/>.

<sup>42</sup> Brian Kuebler, “State demolishes city block in east Baltimore through Project C.O.R.E.,” *WMAR Baltimore*, February 10, 2017, accessed April 24, 2017, <http://www.abc2news.com/news/region/baltimore-city/state-demolishes-city-block-in-east-baltimore-through-project-core>.

Director of Preservation and Outreach for Baltimore Heritage, who said “Speaking broadly, I think that there is substantial support for demolition among resident leaders in many of the neighborhoods where demolition is taking place, although I think that there is also a great deal of frustration that what West Baltimore needed was a significant investment in public transportation, and what it’s getting is significant investment in demolition.”<sup>43</sup>

All of Baltimore’s strategies so far have been focused on how to most quickly, economically, and efficiently deal with vacant properties. Most strategies have included a both rehabilitation and demolition. Despite all of these programs, over fifty years the number of vacant buildings in the city has continued to increase. However well-intentioned or executed, the programs have not been able to stem population loss, in part because the conditions of many neighborhoods on the east and west sides of the city have not improved. The city has failed to include any of its demolition plans in a long-term comprehensive plan to guide its future.

### ***The Effect of Project C.O.R.E. on Sandtown-Winchester***

Immediately following the announcement of Project C.O.R.E., the entire 1000 block of North Stricker Street that served as the backdrop to Governor Hogan and Mayor Rawlings-Blake’s speeches in Sandtown-Winchester was demolished.<sup>44</sup> In the rest of the neighborhood, properties demolished through Phase I of Project C.O.R.E. in

---

<sup>43</sup> Eli Pousson, in discussion with the author, November 2016.

<sup>44</sup> Luke Broadwater and Yvonne Wenger, “Gov. Hogan announces \$700M Plan to target urban decay in Baltimore,” *Baltimore Sun*, January 5, 2016.

2016 were clustered on North Calhoun Street, the intersection of North Mount and Mosher Streets, and the intersection of North Stockton and Baker Streets. A map of these properties created by Baltimore Housing, identified at least nine other demolition clusters funded separately from Project C.O.R.E.<sup>45</sup>



Illustration 4.1. Demolition of vacant rowhouses on North Stricker Street on January 5, 2016. Photograph by Amy Davis for *The Baltimore Sun*.

Project C.O.R.E. is a harmful public policy, both for Baltimore, and more specifically for Sandtown-Winchester. By design, the plan concentrates demolition clusters in predominantly African-American neighborhoods. In Baltimore City the neighborhoods that have the highest levels of vacant properties also have the highest

---

<sup>45</sup> “Baltimore Housing Code Map,” *Baltimore Housing*, <http://cels.baltimorehousing.org/codemap/demoMap.html/>.

percent of African-American residents.<sup>46</sup> Sandtown is 96.6 percent African-American and the 72-square-blocks of the neighborhood have approximately 848 vacant buildings and 767 vacant lots.<sup>47</sup> In the majority African-American neighborhood Broadway East neighborhood in East Baltimore, there are over 1,000 vacant properties. Proportionally, since more vacant buildings are in minority neighborhoods, it follows that more properties will be demolished in these neighborhoods. This is proven by the fact that for Phase I of Project C.O.R.E., there were five demolition clusters of one or more properties in Sandtown-Winchester, and thirteen in Broadway East, whereas the predominantly white areas of Fell's Point and Federal Hill do not have any proposed demolitions.<sup>48</sup> As noted by Eli Pousson at Baltimore Heritage, looking at the issue historically, it is impossible not to see race as a contributor to the issue of vacancy.

---

<sup>46</sup> According to Baltimore City Housing Data, the neighborhoods of Broadway East, Sandtown-Winchester, and Carrollton Ridge have the highest proportions of vacant buildings, all of these neighborhoods also have African-American populations of over 90%, <https://data.baltimorecity.gov/Housing-Development/Vacant-Buildings/cext-wn76>.

<sup>47</sup> See Baltimore CityView, <http://cityview.baltimorecity.gov/>.

<sup>48</sup> "Project C.O.R.E. Demolition Map," *Baltimore Housing*, <http://cels.baltimorehousing.org/codemap/demoMap.html>.

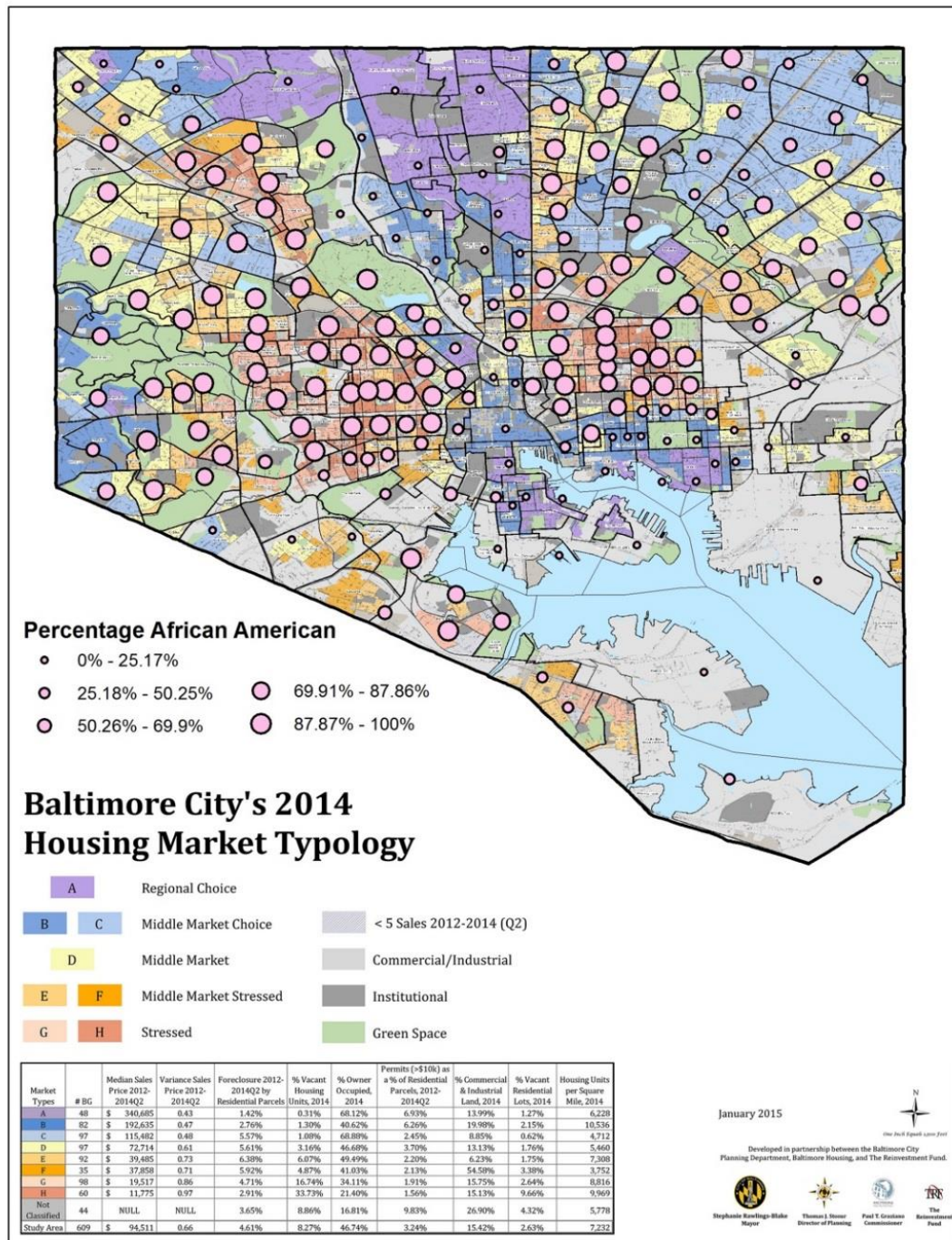


Figure 4.1. Baltimore City's 2014 Housing Market Typology Map overlaid with Racial Demographic Statistics from the 2015 American Community Survey. Map by Paige Barnum, March 2017.



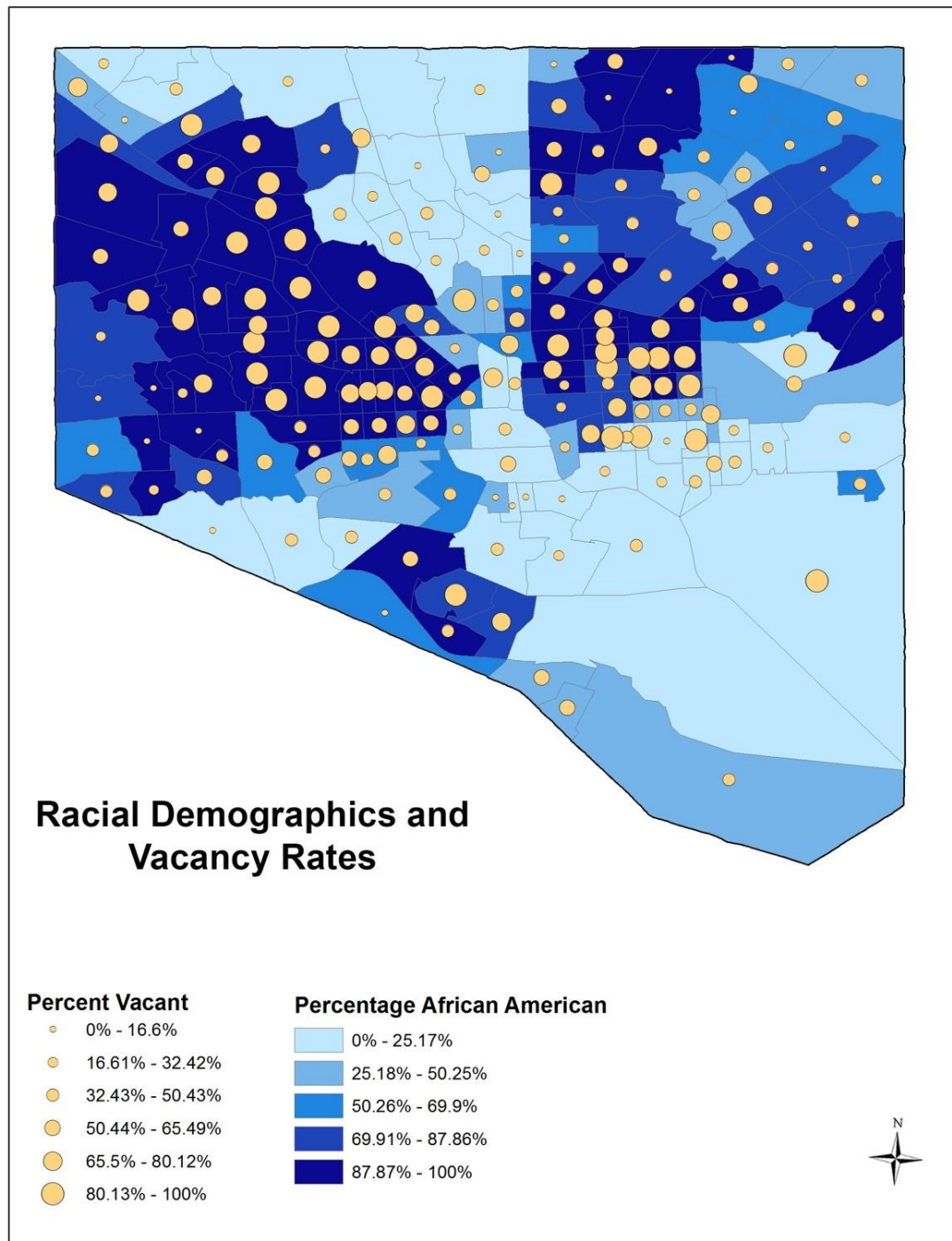


Figure 4.2. Map depicting racial distribution in Baltimore City overlaid with percent vacant housing units. Map by Paige Barnum, March 2017.

Plans for Project C.O.R.E. have thus far shown little regard for historic resources. Sandtown-Winchester is part of the Old West Baltimore Historic District listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This means that aside from buildings in the neighborhood that are non-contributing structures, the resources threatened with demolition are historic. Not only that, these historic resources represent the history of thousands of African-Americans who have lived in the neighborhood since blacks began moving there in the early 20th century. This rich and vibrant history, chronicled in the nomination form and in many other works discussing the history of Baltimore, does not come to the forefront as a concern in Project C.O.R.E. As noted by professor of urban studies Stephanie Ryberg-Webster,

Mallach and Brachman's (2013) three types of legacy city neighborhoods, for example, illustrate the lack of heritage values in urban policy making as the location of historic resources certainly do not neatly align with "core," "intact," and "disinvested" areas. Rather, due to the long and complex intertwining of race and class in US cities, there is the potential that disinvested areas are disproportionately minority and/or low-income communities and unfettered demolition in these neighborhoods could lead to the erasure of important, if not architecturally astounding, heritage resources.<sup>49</sup>

Ryberg-Webster is referring to the "three distinct area types" of legacy cities described by Mallach and Brachman, who use these distinctions to help explain ways to address the housing stock in these different neighborhoods. As she notes, this model is biased towards the preservation of more stable, wealthier neighborhoods, and disadvantages poorer, more distressed areas. Although Sandtown-Winchester is a wealth of historic resources, like Sharon

---

<sup>49</sup> Stephanie Ryberg-Webster and Kelly L. Kinahan, "Historic Preservation and Urban Revitalization in the Twenty-First Century," *Journal of Planning Literature* 29 no. 2 (2014): 131.



Baptist Church and rowhouses dating from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, not all of these resources were consideration valuable by those who designed Project C.O.R.E.

Project C.O.R.E. will also be harmful to Sandtown because widespread demolition will not do anything to improve the conditions of the neighborhood in the long-run. Sandtown has experienced a myriad of different neighborhood revitalization projects that have included everything from affordable housing redevelopment, to job programs, to demolition schemes. During the 1990s the neighborhood served as an experimental testing ground for Rouse's neighborhood transformation theory. Some of the programs introduced had some positive benefits, like loan programs that allowed low-income residents to purchase their first home in the neighborhood. Widespread demolition is not a program that can count any of these successes. In Sandtown, demolitions have resulted in over strewn lots rising up between occupied structures. Many vacant lots throughout the neighborhood now serve as dumping grounds for trash that the city does not pick up. These lots do not get redeveloped, they get left behind. Proponents of widespread demolition argue for the benefits of "blight" elimination, including ridding an area of eyesore properties, while frequently not replacing vacant properties with anything but a vacant lot. Replacing blight with blight is a zero-sum game for Sandtown. If blight is a cancer to urban neighborhoods, demolition is not the automatic cure.

Demolition is the easy solution for policy makers because it does not have to respond to any of the complex questions around urban decay and abandonment that created the vacant properties in the first place. Instead of answering any of these questions, or solving neighborhood problems, demolition only creates more questions,

like what the future of a cleared neighborhood will be and who gets to decide.

Demolition-only policies are short-sighted because they fail to consider the potential for reuse that vacant properties have. But vacant buildings have tremendous value, from an environmental, economic, and often historic point of view. A problem as complex as how to manage thousands of vacant properties deserves solutions that are equally as intricate, and that address more than just how a neighborhood visually appears.

### ***Alternative Strategies for Managing Vacant Properties in Sandtown-Winchester***

While widespread demolition is not the appropriate answer to Baltimore's problem of vacant properties, there are a myriad of other solutions that take a more comprehensive and critical approach. When demolition is the last as opposed to the first solution for neighborhood revitalization, a host of other, more innovative approaches are able to come to the fore. These include preservation-specific strategies such as mothballing, as well broader neighborhood planning strategies like community land trusts. In order for Baltimore to create more vibrant and viable neighborhoods, a variety of strategies will have to be employed in tandem. If the \$93 million devoted to Project C.O.R.E. was instead diverted to a diverse array of revitalization and preservation strategies, Baltimore could avoid the negative consequences of rightsizing.

#### **1) Preserving Vacant Buildings for Future Use**

The most essential part of preserving vacant buildings is the physical protection of the resources. No vacant or abandoned building can be put back to use if

the building materials are left to decay. The primary solution for managing vacant and abandoned properties is mothballing. Mothballing is the process by which vacant properties are closed up and secured to be protected from the elements as well as vandalism and decay.<sup>50</sup> While properties can be mothballed for the short-term, buildings in Sandtown-Winchester will need to be mothballed for the long-term. Proper mothballing procedures can secure a building for up to ten years. This process includes three primary steps, including documentation, stabilization, and mothballing.<sup>51</sup>

In order to mothball correctly, the first step is to document the historic and architectural significance and provide a conditions assessment of the building. This work can be undertaken by an architectural historian or other preservation professional. The next step in the process, stabilization, begins with exterminating and controlling pests that may have infiltrated the structure. The building then needs to be secured structurally, which can include processes such as shoring up the roof, and installing bracing beams. Then the structure needs to have exterior protection from moisture penetration. The process of mothballing includes securing the building to protect it from damage that could be caused by vandalism and break-ins. This typically includes securing points of entry to the building. It is important that the interior still receives adequate ventilation to protect the materials. The utility and

---

<sup>50</sup> Sharon C. Park, "Mothballing Historic Buildings," *National Park Service*, accessed January 29, 2017, <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/31-mothballing.htm>.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

mechanical systems of the buildings should also be modified, which may include cutting off electrical and telephone lines.<sup>52</sup>

The process of mothballing properties in Sandtown-Winchester is a process that could encourage collaboration between different organizations in the city, as well as provide employment for neighborhood residents. If neighborhood organizations such as The No Boundaries Coalition collaborated with Baltimore Heritage and Habitat for Humanity of the Chesapeake, the organizations could create a mothballing plan that combined local knowledge and experience of neighborhood residents with preservation and housing knowledge. The model for this comes from Cincinnati where the city's Historic Stabilization of Structures (SOS) program uses a modest budget to stabilize historic properties that do not currently have an investor.<sup>53</sup> This program was replicated by the Hamilton County Land Reutilization (Land Bank), which dedicates 200,000 dollars to stabilizing historic properties obtained by the land bank. The land bank identifies historic properties to preserve by rating them based on "architectural significance, its contribution to the immediate surroundings, community support for the structure, the likelihood it will soon return to productive use and whether other funding can be leveraged."<sup>54</sup>

---

<sup>52</sup> Sharon C. Park, "Mothballing Historic Buildings," *National Park Service*, accessed January 29, 2017, <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/31-mothballing.htm>.

<sup>53</sup> John Johnston, "Program out to preserve Hamilton county's past," *Cincinnati.com*, January 8, 2014, accessed February 12, 2017, <http://www.cincinnati.com/story/news/2014/01/08/program-out-to-preserve-hamilton-countys-past/4365629/>.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

In conjunction with a mothballing plan, the City of Baltimore should develop and implement a maintenance and monitoring plan to ensure the continued protection of secured properties. In many municipalities the responsibility for such work is done through a collaboration between several different departments. In Baltimore this work could be undertaken through a partnership between Baltimore Housing, who manages the receivership process and sale of vacant properties, as well as code enforcement, and the Department of Public Works, who is responsible for cleaning and boarding vacant properties. If these departments were given additional funding they would be able to hire more staff to create an appropriate timeline to monitor vacant properties and if necessary, make repairs to mothballed buildings.

In order to enhance the aesthetic nature of mothballed properties, the city should consider using clearboards. One of the latest trends in best practices for mothballing, clearboards are polycarbonate or plastic substitutes for plywood often employed in mothballing to secure openings to buildings. Last year Fannie Mae announced that it would reimburse owners of vacant properties the cost difference of clearboarding over plywood. One of the advantages of using clearboarding over plywood is that it makes it more difficult to break into the building. Another positive aspect of this material is that it makes vacant properties more attractive. The fact that it allows for outsiders to see into the property can prevent abandoned properties from becoming havens for criminal activity. Coupled with these advantages though is the problem that because of its strength, firefighters have to cut through it with an electric saw, a process that takes longer than cutting through plywood. Another problem with clearboarding is the cost, as it is nearly six times more expensive to use clearboards

over plywood.<sup>55</sup> This year Ohio became the first state to ban the use of plywood to secure vacant properties, and Phoenix became the first city to require the use of clearboards on all vacant buildings.<sup>56</sup> If applied to vacant properties in Sandtown-Winchester, clearboarding could improve the appearance of the neighborhood, the viability of vacant properties, and potentially detract criminals and vandals from abusing abandoned spaces.<sup>57</sup>

Preserving vacant structures in Sandtown-Winchester would not only create more possibilities for reinvestment, it would preserve the historic urban fabric of the city. The work of mothballing vacant buildings could create jobs for residents of these neighborhoods as well as create opportunities for future redevelopment of these structures.

## 2) Community Land Trust

One neighborhood grassroots strategy that has enormous potential in Sandtown is a community land trust (CLT). Community land trusts are nonprofit corporations that collectively own land in a neighborhood for the benefit of community members. It is a strategy that guards land from the pressures of the real estate market by ensuring that it is never resold. In order to achieve this goal, CLTs “acquire land through

---

<sup>55</sup> Esther Honig, “Ohio Lawmakers Ban Use of Plywood to Board up Vacant Buildings,” *National Public Radio*, January 17, 2017, <http://www.npr.org/2017/01/17/510204570/ohio-lawmakers-ban-use-of-plywood-to-board-up-vacant-buildings>.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Rachel Kaufman, “Plywood substitute for vacant houses gets national backer,” *NextCity*, November 22, 2016, <https://nextcity.org/daily/entry/plywood-vacant-houses-boardup-alternative-clearboarding>.

purchase or donation with an intention to retain title in perpetuity.”<sup>58</sup> CLTs determine appropriate uses for the land they purchase, and subsequently lease the land to individuals, families, businesses, community organizations, or other groups. Land trusts are established in order to make communities stewards of the land to promote greening efforts, create locally-owned businesses, create community-supported agriculture, permanently affordable housing, and other community-driven enterprises. In urban areas, creating and maintaining permanently affordable housing in a neighborhood is frequently the primary goal of a land trust.

The land trust model in the United States originated in Albany, Georgia in 1969 by Civil Rights leaders who were looking for ways to secure access to land for African-American farmers. Relying on the legal procedures used by the Jewish National Fund for gaining land in Israel at the turn of the 20th century, the model they created allowed for individuals to hold leases for homesteads, and created cooperative leases for farms. The Albany group bought five thousand acres in Georgia, then developed and leased it to African-American farmers. This allowed for these people to have the right to farm and live affordably in the post-Civil Rights country.<sup>59</sup>

In order to establish a land trust, first an organization or group of individuals that want to create a land trust need to incorporate as a nonprofit organization. The CLT then has to acquire the capital necessary to buy parcels of land from the city or

---

<sup>58</sup> Institute for Community Economics (Springfield, Mass.), *The Community Land Trust Handbook*, (Emmaus, Pa.: Rodale Press, 1982), 18.

<sup>59</sup> Susan Witt and Robert Swann, “Land: challenge and opportunity,” in *Rooted in the Land: Essays on community and place*, eds. William Vitek and Wes Jackson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 246.

other owners, which may include relying on public subsidies to cover the cost of the purchase. The CLT is then able to establish a long-term ground lease, frequently 99 years, for the land, and either develop properties on it, or rehabilitate existing properties to be sold as affordable housing.<sup>60</sup>

The process of a homeowner buying a house through the CLT begins with the purchaser obtaining a mortgage. This mortgage goes to pay down the principal on the loan, thereby allowing the homeowner to build equity in the improvement on the land. The purchaser also pays an annual fee to the CLT that pays for the land that the organization is leasing to the homeowner. If and when the owner decides to sell the house, the price for the house is set at an affordable rate for the neighborhood based on a formula that has previously been agreed upon in the land trust agreement. The homeowner can subsequently gain some price appreciation from the housing market, and a secure return on their equity, but the house remains affordable for the next buyer to purchase.<sup>61</sup>

In Baltimore, the first land trust to be established was the Charm City Land Trust in 2000. It was formed by a group of community leaders who had a vision of preserving land in neighborhoods, and connecting residents to land resources. They started working in the north-central community of Woodberry where they helped residents establish their own land trust.<sup>62</sup> The neighborhood featured a 100-acre forest,

---

<sup>60</sup> Institute for Community Economics (Springfield, Mass.), *The Community Land Trust Handbook*, (Emmaus, Pa.: Rodale Press, 1982), 19.

<sup>61</sup> Peter Sabonis and Matt Hill, “Community + Land + Trust: Tools for Development without displacement,” *Baltimore Housing Roundtable*, 2016, 24.

<sup>62</sup> Ann Sackey, in discussion with the author, November 2016.



50 of which were sold to Loyola University for development despite the Woodberry Land Trust's dissent. Frustrated by this encroachment of the natural landscape by development, the Woodberry Land Trust began to focus on protecting the remainder of the forest. In order to do this, the Land Trust negotiated agreements to transfer parcels of the land from the Departments of Planning and Housing to the Department of Recreation & Parks.<sup>63</sup>

Ann Sackey, Vice President of the Charm City Land Trust, described that while their initial thrust was about greening strategies and managing open spaces in the neighborhood, they later incorporated housing development as one of their focal initiatives. Around 2007 they became focused on the McElderry neighborhood of East Baltimore. Here the group narrowed in on 'blight elimination,' because following demolitions the remaining vacant lots became dumping grounds for trash. Neighborhood residents wanted these spaces to be cleaned up, but they also wanted to create green spaces, as the neighborhood previously did not have any. Now, the neighborhood has the "Amazing Port Street Sacred Commons," which features community gardens, a prayer labyrinth, and open green space on land where twenty vacant buildings were demolished.<sup>64</sup>

Thus far the land trust model in Baltimore has primarily been used in places where property values are rising, and residents are trying to prevent displacement due to rising rents and property values. This same model could have a positive impact on

---

<sup>63</sup> "Park Support Groups of Baltimore City: The Woodberry Land Trust," *Parks and People Foundation*, 2006.

<sup>64</sup> Ann Sackey, in discussion with the author, November 2016.

areas that are not receiving high or any level of investment because the core tenant of the land trust model is community control. This is important in Sandtown-Winchester because so often in the past residents have not had agency over what happened to their neighborhood. Having a land trust would begin to allow residents to make decisions about how vacant buildings and lots are used without having to include the city.

Sandtown could use the land trust model to work to create affordable housing, something that is desperately needed there. Matt Hill, co-author of the “Community + Land + Trust” report by the Baltimore Housing Roundtable and fair housing lawyer, describes the question in Sandtown and other similar areas as being how do you direct development dollars into these neighborhoods without displacing people. He views CLTs as a tool to build community capacity to create a voice for the community in development that is not there right now—at least not, in his view, with the capacity to create a community plan. As noted by Sandtown resident and community leader William Scipio, affordable housing remains a problem in the neighborhood. This model could offer a way to create housing that would remain affordable for the foreseeable future.

The land trust model is compatible with Baltimore because of the similarity it bears to the ground rent system on which the city was founded. Through the ground rent system, one person would own the land, and allow whomever wanted to build on that land would pay rent for the land.<sup>65</sup> Land trusts allow for residents to own their own homes, while the CLT owns the land itself. Through CLTs homeowners are also

---

<sup>65</sup> Sherry Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 12.

able to receive a return on equity while being able to afford a house, and subsequently pass on an affordable house to someone else should they decide to sell.

An additional reason this would be a good course of action for Sandtown is that it would help the neighborhood manage vacant lots and other open spaces in the neighborhood. Land management is one of the core tenants of the land trust, and those who have run successful land trusts in the city could help to teach them about how to do so. In Sandtown, hundreds of the total 767 vacant lots have been ‘adopted’ through Baltimore Housing’s Adopt-A-Lot Program.<sup>66</sup> Some of the adopters include Men of Valuable Action (M.O.V.A.), a non-profit organization from New Song Church which helps ex-offenders train for jobs and gain leadership skills. The Farm Alliance of Baltimore manages the ‘Strength to Love 2’ urban farm on 1.5 acres in the neighborhood.<sup>67</sup> Having a land trust in the neighborhood would provide more opportunities for the community to creatively reuse some of the vacant lots, and would allow these organizations to expand their vacant lot management processes.

The challenges that Sandtown would face in implementing a community land trust would be similar to the ones that Sackey and others faced when working to develop the model in McElderry Park. The first is keeping neighbors educated and engaged with the process. Neighbors may not initially be aware that they actually control what happens to community land. The stakeholders are the ones who make the decisions in the model, so engagement is a key component. This would be crucial in

---

<sup>66</sup> See Baltimore Housing’s website for the most updated list of adopted and available vacant lots.

<sup>67</sup> “Strength To Love 2,” *Farm Alliance of Baltimore*, accessed March 20, 2017, <http://www.farmalliancebaltimore.org/farms/strength-to-love-ii/>.

Sandtown, a neighborhood of thousands of people, who have seen scores of revitalization efforts and community organizations come and go. There would need to be a committed group of board members from across the neighborhood that would be able to bring people together and keep them informed and engaged in the decision-making process.

Another problem that Sackey and other leaders struggled with when starting the CLT was maintaining their focus. Greening lots remains the focus of their work, but housing has also become part of their list of priorities. The tendency could be to become distracted by programs administered by the city government and becoming concerned with competing for that money or attention. It is important for the land trust to develop a clear focus, whether that is greening, housing, or other causes. Since Sandtown has had so many different programs all with different foci, the community would have to decide how they want to use the land trust most effectively to their advantage. They would have to keep their focus on these main issues.

In late January 2016, a few weeks following the Project C.O.R.E. announcement, the Baltimore Housing Roundtable released a manifesto of their vision for fair and equitable development. The Baltimore Housing Roundtable started in 2013 by the union United Workers, and is a coalition of community leaders who are focused on community development. The report, “Community + Land + Trust,” traces the history of uneven development in Baltimore City, and critiques the city’s lack of affordable housing. The authors of this report are challenging the city to invest in projects that provide better opportunities to fair and equitable housing and creates developments that do not displace residents. In it the Roundtable asks the city to

commit \$20 million a year to hire chronically unemployed people to help demolish vacant properties, and \$20 million a year for rebuilding and renovating properties to become permanently affordable housing. They also advocate for community land trusts as equitable solutions for creating and maintaining fair and affordable housing in neighborhoods.<sup>68</sup>

Fair development is a central demand of the Roundtable. Authors Hill and Sabonis identify five tenants of fair development: universality, equity, participation, transparency, and accountability.<sup>69</sup> These principles are meant to ensure that the desires of communities remain central to revitalization strategies. They are designed to prevent developers from exerting excessive power, money, and influence over communities that have significant development pressure. Roundtable members argue that the city's policies of development over the past forty years have represented a "trickle-down" mindset, but that job opportunities and wealth have not reached some of the poorest communities.<sup>70</sup>

One of the described long-term goals of Project C.O.R.E. is that through clearing vacant housing, new, affordable and mixed-income housing will be able to be developed. Housing Roundtable members, however, question how new housing will meet the needs of Baltimore. In the city, one-third of Baltimore families were homeless or nearly homeless in 2014. Fifty-three percent of renters and forty percent

---

<sup>68</sup> Peter Sabonis and Matt Hill, "Community + Land + Trust: Tools for Development without displacement," *Baltimore Housing Roundtable*, 2016, 3.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

of homeowners paid more than one-third of their incomes for housing. This means that nearly half of all Baltimore residents live in unaffordable housing. Project C.O.R.E. leaders have yet to respond to how it will ensure that future development promised to come from demolition will be for affordable housing.<sup>71</sup>

Another concern of Roundtable leaders is that communities have not and will continue to not be involved with the planning process. Residents were not included in deciding which properties would be demolished, and have not been included in discussions about the future of the vacant lots in the neighborhood. Furthermore, since many neighborhoods do not have organizations with the capacity to ensure development stays in the community once initial funds run out, they fear these efforts will not be sustainable and will not end up benefiting the communities they promise to.<sup>72</sup> Roundtable members are also concerned that the Project C.O.R.E. plans do not respond to broader revitalization plans for neighborhoods.

While the preservation of existing building stock to create affordable housing is a strategy that other land trusts have used, so far this has not been as common in Baltimore. However, co-author of “Community + Land + Trust” and attorney Matt Hill said that land trusts in the city have looked at using vacant buildings as an option. He said that land trusts and groups attempting to establish land trusts are “trying to crack both nuts, the vacant issue in their neighborhoods, as well as affordable

---

<sup>71</sup> Peter Sabonis and Matt Hill, “Community+Land+Trust: Tools for Development without displacement,” *Baltimore Housing Roundtable*, 2016, 15.

<sup>72</sup> Matt Hill, Chris Lafferty, and Ty Hullinger, “The reality of Gov. Hogan’s Baltimore Investment,” *Baltimore Sun*, January 15, 2016.

housing...so obviously scattered site rehab of a significant number of properties is something they're looking at."

There are limits to the land trust model, however, and it is not the only way to create community capacity and retain affordable housing. Like other community revitalization efforts, land trusts can struggle from lack of sustainability if there is not continued interest and leadership training. Land trusts can also suffer if they are unable to acquire the necessary funding, or if their funding runs out. Although land trusts are a successful housing and land management model, they often need to be paired with broader neighborhood revitalization strategies. Ann Sackey thinks that the city needs as many strategies as it can, and that while land trusts are one model, they are not the only way to achieve the goal of creating and maintaining affordable housing.

### 3) Historic Preservation and Informal Preservation

In Sandtown-Winchester there are not any examples of formal methods of historic preservation playing an active role in neighborhood revitalization. However, historic preservation has an important role to play not only in protecting and utilizing the historic resources of the neighborhood, but also in harnessing public history as a tool to empower and strengthen the community. In order for preservation to fulfill its role as an alternative to widespread demolition in Sandtown-Winchester, there are several policy changes that need to be made in the city. Along with these policy changes, there are several ways in which methods of informal preservation can be supported and advanced, methods through which nonprofits can support public history initiatives in the neighborhood.

Before Project C.O.R.E. demolition sites were selected, the city should have completed a citywide historic resource survey. Although the city has hundreds of properties on national and local historic registers, there are bound to be more structures and districts that have not yet been designated that should. It was irresponsible to create a citywide demolition plan before creating a citywide historic preservation plan. Despite this oversight, and given that the time and resources needed to complete a citywide survey would make the endeavor particularly costly, the city should instead consider completing windshield surveys of historic resources in the areas affected by Project C.O.R.E, beginning with the neighborhoods that are projected to have the most demolitions take place. While these areas have likely already lost significant resources, conducting an historic resource survey would allow preservationists and planners a new and broader perspective on what is historic in the city and how preservation can be better integrated into future comprehensive planning.

For preservation to remain viable in a low-income neighborhood like Sandtown-Winchester, Baltimore's historic preservation code should be amended to become more flexible. In historic districts under CHAP's purview, if a building owner wants to make exterior changes to his or her building, they have to obtain a building permit signed off on by CHAP. This includes the removal, reconstruction or alteration of any exterior architectural feature, any change in exterior color, exterior excavation, the construction of an exterior building, wall, fence, or other structure, and any exterior demolition. In order to undertake any project of these sorts, the building owner must first file a permit application, which then is sent to CHAP. Based on the request of CHAP, the applicant may be required to submit detailed



plans, elevations, and other specifications to the commission. A public hearing may or may not be held, and the Commission will issue an Authorization to Proceed if they feel that the proposed changes are in keeping with the architectural character of the building and the district if located within an historic district.

While this procedure is relatively standard among historic commissions across the country, it presents several obstacles when carried out in a low-income neighborhood. The first is that these areas often lack the capital to complete historic rehabilitation projects that are in keeping with the strict standards of an historic commission. The building permits for projects in historic districts can range from \$15-50 on top of the costs of actually doing the project, and that can create an undue burden on the homeowner completing the work. If a portion of a bracketed cornice of a rowhouse for example, were to disintegrate and need replacement, the owner may not have either the ability to replace it in kind to historic standards, or the knowledge of how to do so. Sandtown-Winchester lacks the kind of engagement with preservation professionals and organizations in the city to be able to receive assistance on these matters. Strict architectural standards can sometimes be a hindrance to historic preservation in low-income neighborhoods.

The most important reason for altering the preservation standards in Baltimore is the urgency with which the resources in Sandtown-Winchester need to be preserved. With the threat of demolition eminent, and with the damage that prolonged periods of vacancy can cause to a building, rehabilitating and putting them back to use is the most pressing need. This leaves little time to ensure that the windows are acceptable to historic standards or that the paint color is appropriate.

The standards that are used to define historic districts in Baltimore place an emphasis on architectural design and integrity. This is for good reason, since these concerns have been at the forefront of the historic preservation movement since its inception. However, these standards should not override the historic nature of the communities they are meant to protect. While the resources in Sandtown-Winchester are architecturally exceptional, the reason for preserving Sandtown, as the same with any district, is that the neighborhood has an important history to tell. Therefore, tough architectural standards should not be the nail in the coffin of an historic district's survival and viability.

If there is substantial community interest and support for it, Old West Baltimore could be nominated to become a locally designated historic district. The primary reason for this is that its history is significant to the history of Baltimore city. As referenced in the National Register nomination, the district is significant architecturally, for community planning and development, and for its African-American heritage. Since most local designations come about because of the will of communities, it would suggest that residents in Sandtown have not sought this designation either through not knowing the benefits for doing so, or because they decided not to pursue the option for other reasons.

There would be several benefits to Sandtown and other nearby neighborhoods if they area were to become locally designated district. If Old West Baltimore was a locally designated Historical and Architectural district, the properties therein would be better protected from the threat of demolition because it would be required that the buildings be reviewed by CHAP. These kind of protections would ensure that

demolitions would be reviewed, ensuring that the whole portrait of the district is taken into consideration, and that structures are reviewed in relation to surrounding properties. This also means that this area of the city is not held accountable under the preservation by neglect ordinance of CHAP regulations.<sup>73</sup> Making Old West Baltimore a local district would help protect valuable and threatened resources to wanton, widespread demolition.

Residents and organizations in Sandtown-Winchester have been involved in what is known as “informal preservation” for decades. Informal preservation refers to the process by which historic properties are rehabilitated without standard preservation procedures such as landmarking and the use of historic tax credits. Prior to anyone considering Sandtown-Winchester as “historic” or of historic value, individuals and groups like Habitat for Humanity have been rehabilitating rowhouses and putting them back to use. While these projects do not fit the mold of traditional preservation, they are important because they allow for the work of rehabilitating and reusing vacant properties to continue.

There are a number of funding sources available to Baltimore communities that would allow this kind of informal preservation and community development to continue. For starters, Baltimore Housing’s Office of Rehabilitation Services administers a number of loan programs to help low and moderate income residents make repairs to and weatherize their homes. Loans are given to complete projects such as roof repairs, disability accessibility, and structural repairs. These loans may be

---

<sup>73</sup> “Baltimore City Historic Preservation Rules and Regulations,” *Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation, Baltimore City Department of Planning*, December 8, 2015.

deferred or forgiven based on the individual applicant's eligibility. Grants are also available to complete weatherization projects.<sup>74</sup>

The same funding source that supports Project C.O.R.E. also supports the Community Legacy Neighborhood Intervention Program. Local governments and community development organizations are eligible to apply for this grant funding that supports “investment in older neighborhoods,” and supports revitalization plans in designated Sustainable Community Areas.<sup>75</sup>

Ideally, projects done on properties in Sandtown-Winchester would be eligible for grant funding through the African American Heritage Preservation Program, a joint project of the Maryland Historical Trust and the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture. This program administers grants to assist with the preservation of buildings, sites, and communities that have related historical and cultural importance to the black experience in the state. The grant funding can be applied to acquisition, rehabilitation, new construction, and predevelopment costs of projects. However this program requires that projects adhere to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards, something that, as noted, not all homeowners are able to do.<sup>76</sup>

Thus far, there has been limited interaction between historic preservation professionals and organizations and Sandtown-Winchester. Baltimore Heritage has

---

<sup>74</sup> “Baltimore Housing Application,” *Baltimore Housing*, accessed February 10, 2017, [http://static.baltimorehousing.org/pdf/ghsh\\_app.pdf](http://static.baltimorehousing.org/pdf/ghsh_app.pdf).

<sup>75</sup> “State Revitalization Programs FY2017 Application Guidelines,” *Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development*, 5, [https://projectportal.dhcd.state.md.us/Documentation/MDDHCD/SRP\\_FY17\\_Guidelines.pdf](https://projectportal.dhcd.state.md.us/Documentation/MDDHCD/SRP_FY17_Guidelines.pdf).

<sup>76</sup> “African American Heritage Preservation Program Grants for Capital Projects,” *Maryland Historical Trust*, accessed February 10, 2017, [http://mht.maryland.gov/grants\\_africanamerican.shtml](http://mht.maryland.gov/grants_africanamerican.shtml).

been involved in advocacy efforts in the surrounding neighborhoods of Upton and Harlem Park, but not specifically in Sandtown in part because no one in the neighborhood has reached out to them.<sup>77</sup> Historic preservation has an important role to play in this community, however, both through how it can help residents retain the built environment, as well as how public history can have a positive effect on revitalization efforts. The key to including more historic preservation initiatives in this neighborhood is both connecting preservation and neighborhood organizations, as well as creating funding opportunities for preservation to remain viable.

In response to Project C.O.R.E., Preservation Maryland, the statewide nonprofit preservation advocacy organization, and Baltimore Heritage, the citywide nonprofit, proposed a mitigation strategy to lessen the impact of demolitions on historic rowhouses. The proposal asks that some of the state funds be diverted to stabilize historic properties that can be reused, to document buildings that will be demolished, and to provide a staff position at each organization, as well as the Baltimore Department of Housing and Community Development. One of the agreements already made was that 10 percent of C.O.R.E. funding would go to mitigating the effect of losing rowhouses in city designated historic districts. The funding for survey and documentation for which the alliance is asking for could go to

---

<sup>77</sup> Eli Pousson, in discussion with the author, November 2016.

designating more local districts, which could help more neighborhoods preserve their heritage.<sup>78</sup>

Historic preservation professionals in Baltimore can also offer other means of technical assistance and advice to residents in low-income neighborhoods. One of the ways they can do so would be by hosting workshops in the neighborhood on how to do things such as weatherize their homes, or how to make repairs to interior or exterior elements at an affordable cost. These kinds of programs would be remarkably beneficial to lower-income residents who cannot afford to hire someone to make these sorts of home improvements, and do not have the resources or the knowledge to do it on their own. Funding diverted from Project C.O.R.E. could go towards supporting a professional with expertise in technical preservation to perform outreach in low-income communities.

Given the state of the neighborhood today, it is unsurprising that Sandtown is undervalued as an area of historic significance. The rowhouses of the neighborhood are exceedingly ordinary in comparison to the dozens of other rowhouses in the neighborhood, and the decay evident on some of the blocks does not visually suggest it is an important place that anyone cares about. There are no historic signs or emblems interpreting the neighborhood for visitors. But Sandtown's cultural and architectural history is one of its most important assets, one that is not being leveraged

---

<sup>78</sup> "Baltimore Heritage and Preservation Maryland Propose Mitigation Strategy for State Demolition Program," *Preservation Maryland*, accessed February 10, 2017, <http://www.preservationmaryland.org/baltimore-heritage-and-preservation-maryland-propose-mitigation-strategy-for-state-demolition-program/>.

to the extent that it could or should be. Reinterpreting the history of the neighborhood would mean confronting some of the more challenging aspects of the city's history.

One of the ways that Sandtown can showcase the important cultural history of the area would be through a community-based public history project. The precedent for this sort of project in the city is the Baltimore Neighborhood Heritage Project that started in 1977. The basis of the project was collecting oral histories in order to understand the life experiences of ordinary people. It started in the Highlandtown neighborhood at the senior citizens' center, and in 1979 expanded to five other neighborhoods.<sup>79</sup> One of the desired goals of the project was to help residents "connect their personal histories with broader social processes," and to encourage them to be more involved in community organizing and advocacy.<sup>80</sup> Ultimately the project led to the production written histories and essays that appeared in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, the picture book *Baltimore People: Baltimore Places: A Neighborhood Album*, and a theater production called *Baltimore Voices*.<sup>81</sup>

This project could experience a welcome revival in Sandtown-Winchester. A project of this sort would both contribute to neighborhood pride, as well as help cultivate a more positive image of the neighborhood in the minds of those who do not live there. As rich a history that Sandtown-Winchester has, its blocks of rowhouses cannot tell their own stories. A community-led public history residents would create a

---

<sup>79</sup> Linda Shopes, "Oral History and Community Involvement: The Baltimore Neighborhood Heritage Project," in *Presenting the Past: Essays on History and the Public*, eds. Susan Porter Benson, Stephen Brier, and Roy Rosenzweig (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986), 253-254.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 250.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 258.

space for Sandtown residents to share the stories of their lives and of their neighborhood. “Places do not speak; we must speak for them.”<sup>82</sup>

In 2015, Louis Fields, president of the African-American Tourism Council of Maryland, began leading the “Freddie Gray Tour of Baltimore.” The tour visited sites in Sandtown-Winchester significant to Gray’s life and death, beginning with the New Shiloh Baptist Church where his funeral took place. Stops along the tour also included the house where Gray lived as a child on North Carey Street, the site of Gray’s arrest, the Western police station, and the intersection of the CVS that was burned following his death. Fields’ hoped that the tours not only educated people about the neighborhood where Gray came from, but also would help to prevent future incidents. By doing these tours, Fields’ recognized, and works to make others recognize that Gray’s story, and stories like Gray’s have significance, something not everyone acknowledges. In the words of Fields’ “Someone like myself has to say, ‘Hey city, hey city leaders, don’t forget about the rest of our city. Don’t forget about the Freddie Grays,’ ... We invested heavily in the Inner Harbor. We invested heavily in certain communities to make sure you as a tourist, this is what you see. But what about the community called Sandtown?”<sup>83</sup>

Sandtown-Winchester constitutes what Max Page calls a “difficult place,” as a landscape that has been the site of crime, of disinvestment, and of protest. The nature

---

<sup>82</sup> Max Page, *Why Preservation Matters*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 53.

<sup>83</sup> Deborah Weiner, “Tour visits Freddie Gray’s neighborhood,” *WBAL-TV*, February 25, 2016, <http://www.wbaltv.com/article/tour-visits-freddie-gray-s-neighborhood/7099120>.



of its past, however, is one of the reasons preserving it is so important.<sup>84</sup>

Understanding and interpreting the complete history of our cities, particularly the recent past, is an exercise that will be more meaningful and complete should diverse places still physically exist. The preservation of difficult places matters because it helps communities confront the challenging stories of the past, something that will hopefully prevent them from repeating. The difficult, recent past for Sandtown does not begin or end with Freddie Gray, and public commemoration, no matter how formal or informal, matters.



Illustration 4.2. Mural on the Gilmore Homes public housing project, the site of Freddie Gray's arrest on April 12, 2015. Photograph by author, November 17, 2016.

---

<sup>84</sup> Page, *Why Preservation Matters*, 154.

While all of these tools and strategies would play an important role in helping Sandtown-Winchester, it should be noted that they are not and will not be the only thing necessary in order to improve the impoverished conditions of the neighborhood. Better management of vacant properties and lots cannot improve schools, give people jobs, or tackle drug use. It can, however, both increase neighborhood control of how land is managed, as well as increase community pride.

### ***Conclusion***

Project C.O.R.E., an initiative that derives its policies from the principles of rightsizing, will ultimately have negative consequences for Baltimore. The project, whose only differences from earlier citywide demolition schemes are the scope and the price tag, has already and will continue to wreak havoc on the city's most vulnerable neighborhoods. Instead of continuing down this destructive path, the city should instead invest the \$93 million in alternative strategies to manage vacant properties and lots.

## CONCLUSION

As Project C.O.R.E. demolitions have only just begun, it will be impossible to evaluate the consequences it will have on Baltimore for some time. But as this thesis has suggested, this initiative will likely have long-term negative impacts on the city. There are no easy answers to solving the complex problems of managing vacant buildings and lots, improving shrinking cities and neighborhoods, addressing urban abandonment, neighborhood revitalization, and how to make planning and preservation more inclusive and democratic processes. A wrecking ball alone cannot save a shrinking city. This thesis has presented substantial evidence to suggest that a solution as one-size-fits-all as rightsizing will not solve Baltimore's problems.

As illustrated by the city's history, Baltimore has consistently struggled with issues related to race and racism. Its history also reveals that planning in the city has been impacted by this. During the 1990s in the Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood it appeared as though that things were changing in the city, and that community planning through Community Building in Partnership would be an inclusive process that would have lasting benefits for the neighborhood. The failure of this initiative to sustain change, however, is one of the factors that allowed Sandtown to decline again, eventually creating the conditions that some suggest led to Freddie Gray's arrest and subsequent death.

Through a close examination of the origin of rightsizing theory, its early implementation in cities, and a literature review of the topic, the following conclusions were made. First, from the beginning of when the theory of rightsizing was suggested in the 1970s, it was noted that these policies would disproportionately affect lower-

income minority communities. Second, based on Jason Hackworth's groundbreaking study of the effect that widespread demolition policies have had on American cities since 1970, there is substantial evidence that neighborhoods affected by these policies tend to become poorer, less educated, more racially segregated, and have higher vacancy rates than they did previously. Third, despite the fact that several scholars, most notably Justin B. Hollander and Jeremy Németh, have raised concerns about rightsizing planning from an equity perspective, generally research critiquing rightsizing policy has not yet significantly impacted planners and politicians who continue to implement these policies.

Just as predicted by the authors of "Triage as Urban Policy" thirty-five years ago, Project C.O.R.E. is planned to have a disproportionate impact on predominately lower-income, African-American neighborhoods, as the majority of demolition clusters are concentrated in these areas. However, if the City of Baltimore was to think critically about diverting funding for demolition to preservation, there would be opportunities created to preserve the diverse heritage of Sandtown-Winchester and reuse its historic resources.

From an equity perspective, Project C.O.R.E. raises serious questions about how rightsizing policies are planned and executed and who they are designed to benefit. Project C.O.R.E. is designed to have the greatest impact on the most racially segregated and economically disadvantaged communities in the city. While many of these areas have been effected by substantial population loss and abandonment, the people who remain in these neighborhoods have no say in what happens to the place they call home. Those who are in some of the most privileged and powerful positions

in the city are able to reshape the built environment of neighborhoods they need never visit or live in. Rightsizing is the least equitable solution for shrinking cities because it seeks to erase the image of poverty and disinvestment without actually addressing these problems.

Instead of obsessing over how to reshape and control the built environment, the City of Baltimore should attempt to solve the problems that created the state of the city in the first place. Instead of directing millions of dollars to demolition, the city should funnel more money into the organizations and initiatives that are improving housing conditions, connecting people to jobs, helping to end homelessness, and helping people get better access to affordable healthcare. Baltimore should think about how its abundance of vacant buildings can actually help the city address some of its more challenging problems in the long-run. In this way, the benefits of historic preservation have the potential to impact a more diverse cross-section of the population, making it a more equitable tool for neighborhood revitalization.

### ***Limitations and Future Work***

One of the major limitations of this thesis is the limited amount of research and literature on how rightsizing policies have affected American cities. Part of the reason for this is timing, as there has not been significant enough time to research and analyze the effects of this policy. It is also limited in the amount of data available specifically linking demolition-only policies and race. The author attempted to make some of these connections in Baltimore, but the results were largely specific to Sandtown-Winchester.

Future work should be done to study the implications of rightsizing policies on all different kinds of city spaces. More research is needed to understand how widespread demolition policies are affecting neighborhoods of different socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic make-ups. The majority of research on rightsizing focuses on cities of the northeast and Midwest, but rightsizing patterns in other parts of the country should be studied as well. More research is needed to fully understand the effect that rightsizing is having on the historic urban fabric of this country.

Historic preservation has an important role to play in discussions of rightsizing in planning, but thus far preservationists have failed to advocate adequately for disinvested communities. It is the responsibility of preservationists to not only stand up for a diverse array of resources, but also a diverse array of people and communities. Historic preservationists should continue to question rightsizing policies, including the assumptions and biases of those who design them. As Max Page so eloquently wrote in *Why Preservation Matters*, “Preservation has to be reconfigured as a social justice movement or else it will have lost its moral compass.”<sup>85</sup> This is a critical point in the history of planning and preservation where preservationists need to advocate for the most equitable solution for all.

As equity planning becomes more and more central to general planning theory, including that of historic preservation, these professionals will have to demand that solutions for neighborhoods like Sandtown-Winchester meet higher standards of social justice. In the words of preservationist Michael R. Allen “If we are going to help right-

---

<sup>85</sup> Max Page, *Why Preservation Matters*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 80.

size cities, we have to realize that cities are collections of people before they are collections of buildings—and we are going to have to treat urban neighborhoods as something other than the frontiers we seek to intellectually colonize.”<sup>86</sup> Solutions should not be created for the sake of fulfilling a theory of planning while disregarding its effects on human beings. The central concern of planners and preservationists should be how the policies they advocate for affect the most vulnerable members of a city’s population.

---

<sup>86</sup> Michael R. Allen, “What Does “Right Size” Mean for Historic Preservation?” *Preservation Research Office*, September 13, 2013, accessed February 8, 2017, <http://preservationresearch.com/historic-preservation/what-does-right-size-mean-for-historic-preservation/>.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- “About.” *The Center for Community Progress*. Accessed April 11, 2017.  
<http://www.communityprogress.net/about-pages-4.php>
- “About Project C.O.R.E.” *Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development*. Accessed January 22, 2017.  
<http://dhcd.maryland.gov/ProjectCORE/Pages/About.aspx>.
- “About Us-Emilie Evans.” *Place Economics*. Accessed April 12, 2017.  
<http://www.placeeconomics.com/about-us/>.
- “Action Agenda for Historic Preservation in Legacy Cities.” *Preservation Rightsizing Network*. <http://rightsizeplace.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/ActionAgenda.pdf>.
- “Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.” *USA.gov*. Accessed March 21, 2017.  
<http://www.achp.gov/>.
- “African American Heritage Preservation Program Grants for Capital Projects.” *Maryland Historical Trust*. Accessed February 10, 2017.  
[http://mht.maryland.gov/grants\\_africanamerican.shtml](http://mht.maryland.gov/grants_africanamerican.shtml).
- Allen, Michael R. “What Does “Right Size” Mean for Historic Preservation?” *Preservation Research Office*. September 13, 2013. Accessed February 8, 2017. <http://preservationresearch.com/historic-preservation/what-does-right-size-mean-for-historic-preservation/>.
- Ballard, William and G. Thomas Kingsley. “Systems to Improve the Management of city-owned land in Baltimore.” *Urban Institute and Location Age*. 2007.  
<http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/alfresco/publication-pdfs/411866-Systems-to-Improve-the-Management-of-City-Owned-Land-in-Baltimore.PDF>.
- “Baltimore City Historic Preservation Rules and Regulations.” *Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation, Baltimore City Department of Planning*. December 8, 2015.
- “Baltimore Heritage and Preservation Maryland Propose Mitigation Strategy for State Demolition Program.” *Preservation Maryland*. Accessed February 10, 2017.  
<http://www.preservationmaryland.org/baltimore-heritage-and-preservation-maryland-propose-mitigation-strategy-for-state-demolition-program/>.
- “Baltimore Housing Application.” *Baltimore Housing*. Accessed February 10, 2017.  
[http://static.baltimorehousing.org/pdf/ghsh\\_app.pdf](http://static.baltimorehousing.org/pdf/ghsh_app.pdf).



- “Baltimore Housing Code Map.” *Baltimore Housing*. Accessed February 9, 2017.  
<http://cels.baltimorehousing.org/codemap/demoMap.html/>.
- Bertron, Cara. “Rightsizing Right.” *Forum Journal*. Summer 2013.
- . “Right Size, Right Place: A New Role for Preservation.” *Place Economics*.  
 February 12, 2014. Accessed February 12, 2017.  
[http://www.placeeconomics.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/bertron\\_gray-area-talk\\_feb-2014.pdf](http://www.placeeconomics.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/bertron_gray-area-talk_feb-2014.pdf).
- Berube, Alan and Brad McDearman. “Good fortune, dire poverty, and inequality in Baltimore: An American story.” *Brookings Institute*. May 11, 2015.  
<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2015/05/11/good-fortune-dire-poverty-and-inequality-in-baltimore-an-american-story/>.
- Bierman, Noah and Joseph Tanfani. “In Baltimore, riots appear where urban renewal didn’t.” *Los Angeles Times*, April 28, 2015.
- “Blueprint Buffalo: Regional strategies and local tools for reclaiming vacant properties in the city and suburbs of Buffalo.” *National Vacant Properties Campaign*. Accessed February 5, 2017.  
<http://uploads.oneregionforward.org/content/uploads/2013/03/FINAL-BlueprintBuffalo-Action-Plan.pdf>.
- Bock, James and Joan Jacobson. “Carters to help rehab West Baltimore’s Sandtown Habitat program to rebuild homes.” *Baltimore Sun*, March 28, 1992.
- Broadwater, Luke and Yvonne Wenger. “Gov. Hogan announces \$700M plan to target urban decay in Baltimore.” *Baltimore Sun*, January 5, 2016.
- Brown, Prudence, Benjamin Butler, and Ralph Hamilton. “The Sandtown Winchester Neighborhood Transformation Initiative: Lessons Learned About Community Building and Implementation.” *The Enterprise Foundation*. 2001.  
[https://www.chapinhall.org/sites/default/files/old\\_reports/104.pdf](https://www.chapinhall.org/sites/default/files/old_reports/104.pdf).
- “Build Victories and History.” *Baltimoreans United in Leadership Development*. Accessed December 11, 2016. <http://www.buildiaf.org/victories-history/>.
- Campbell, Colin. “One injured in fire, another hurt in building collapse in Baltimore.” *Baltimore Sun*, August 23, 2016.

- Canzian, Eileen. "Co-op to bring more housing to Sandtown." *Baltimore Sun*, June 27, 1982.
- . "\$17 million city renewal project unveiled: Community targeted in West Baltimore." *Baltimore Sun*, March 3, 1989.
- Coates, Jennifer L. "Rouse's Sandtown-Winchester effort was a success." *Baltimore Sun*, June 11, 2015.
- DeGregorio, Jen. "Some claim Baltimore's SCOPE program not living up to promise." *Daily Record* (Baltimore, MD), November 8, 2005.
- DeLuca, Stephanie and Peter Rosenblatt. "Sandtown-Winchester---Baltimore's daring experiment in urban renewal: 20 years later, what are lessons learned?" *The Abell Report* 26, no. 8 (2013): 1-12.
- "Detroit Blight Removal Task Force Plan." *Detroit Blight Removal Task Force*. 2014.
- "Detroit Demolition Program." *City of Detroit*. Accessed January 31, 2017.  
<http://www.detroitmi.gov/demolition>.
- Dilts, James D. "Franklin-Mulberry highways cost is double 1972 estimate." *Baltimore Sun*, October 1, 1975.
- . "In \$40,000 tourist drive: Ad dubs Baltimore 'Charm City.'" *Baltimore Sun*, July 11, 1974.
- Dresser, Michael and Luke Broadwater. "Hogan says no to Red Line, yes to Purple." *Baltimore Sun*, June 25, 2015.
- Easterling, Keller. "Letters to the Mayor." Exhibition at the Storefront for Art and Architecture. April 30, 2014-May 24, 2014,  
<http://kellereasterling.com/exhibitions/letters-to-the-mayor>.
- "Economic Impact of Project SCOPE." *Urban Information Associates Inc.* June 2006.  
[http://www.beefbaltimore.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/BEEF\\_SCOPE\\_ImpactReport\\_2006.pdf](http://www.beefbaltimore.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/BEEF_SCOPE_ImpactReport_2006.pdf).
- Ehrenfeucht, Renia and Marla Nelson. "Recovery in a Shrinking City: Challenges to Rightsizing Post-Katrina New Orleans." In *The City After Abandonment*, edited by Margaret Dewar and June Manning Thomas, 133-150. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013.

- “Evaluation of the Nehemiah Housing Opportunity Program.” *Office of Policy Development and Research, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development*.  
<https://www.huduser.gov/portal/publications/affhsg/evalnehemiahhousing.html>
- “Fact Sheet: Habitat for Humanity of the Chesapeake.” *Habitat for Humanity of the Chesapeake*. Accessed January 8, 2017.  
<https://habitat Chesapeake.org/file/16/HabitatMergerMediaKit.pdf>.
- Farrar, Hayward. *The Baltimore Afro-American*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1998.
- “Favors razing old homes for housing area.” *Baltimore Sun*, February 26, 1942.
- “Featured Project, Sandtown-Winchester.” *Habitat for Humanity of the Chesapeake*. Accessed January 4, 2016, <http://habitat Chesapeake.org/what-we-build/where-we-work/featured-project>.
- Fenton, Justin. “Report: Sandtown-Winchester leads state in number of people incarcerated.” *Baltimore Sun*, February 25, 2015.
- Fernandez-Kelly, Patricia. *The Hero’s Fight: African-Americans in West Baltimore and the Shadow of the State*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2015.
- “Four Year Plan.” *Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development*.  
<http://dhcd.maryland.gov/ProjectCORE/Pages/Plan.aspx>.
- Fritze, John. “Report puts O’Malley on defense over policing.” *Baltimore Sun*, August 11, 2016.
- “Gilmor Homes anniversary: Former residents join festivities.” *Baltimore Sun*, June 9, 1972.
- Goldberger, Paul. “James W. Rouse, 81, Dies; Socially Conscious Developer Built New Townsand Malls.” *New York Times*, April 10, 1996.
- Gunts, Edward. “Home Sweet First Home.” *Baltimore Sun*, July 21, 1991.
- “Habitat’s History.” *Habitat for Humanity*. Accessed April 17, 2017,  
<https://www.habitat.org/about/history>.
- Hackworth, Jason. “Demolition as urban policy in the American rust belt.” *Environment and Planning A* 48, no. 11 (2016): 2201-2222.

- Hahn, Ashley. "Pro-demolition preservationists? Cara Bertron explores rightsizing and demolition." *PlanPhilly*. February 14, 2014.  
<http://planphilly.com/eyesonthestreet/2014/02/14/pro-demolition-preservationists-cara-bertron-explores-rightsizing-and-preservation>.
- Hayward, Mary Ellen and Charles Belfoure. *The Baltimore Rowhouse*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999.
- Hayward, Mary Ellen and Frank R. Shivers Jr. *The Architecture of Baltimore: An Illustrated History*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University, 2004.
- Henry, Helen. "Transformed, a 14-foot wide rowhouse." *Baltimore Sun*, March 10, 1974.
- Hill, Matt, Chris Lafferty, and Ty Hullinger. "The reality of Gov. Hogan's Baltimore Investment." *Baltimore Sun*, January 15, 2016.
- Hinds, Michael Decourcy. "Baltimore's Story of City Homesteading." *New York Times*, January 16, 1986.  
<http://www.nytimes.com/1986/01/16/garden/baltimore-s-story-of-city-homestaeding.html?pagewanted=all>.
- Hollander, Justin B. and Jeremy Németh. "The bounds of smart decline: a foundational theory for planning shrinking cities." *Housing Policy Debate* 21, no. 3 (2011): 349-367.
- Honig, Esther. "Ohio Lawmakers Ban Use of Plywood to Board up Vacant Buildings." *National Public Radio*. January 17, 2017.  
<http://www.npr.org/2017/01/17/510204570/ohio-lawmakers-ban-use-of-plywood-to-board-up-vacant-buildings>.
- "House by House." *Baltimore Sun*, March 14, 2005.
- Housing and Community Development Act of 1987*, Public Law 100-242, 101 U.S. Statutes at Large 1815 (1987).
- Institute for Community Economics (Springfield, Mass.). *The Community Land Trust Handbook*. Emmaus, Pa.: Rodale Press, 1982.
- Jacobson, Joan. "Vacants to Value: Baltimore's bold blight-elimination effort is making modest progress despite limited renovation funds and questionable accounting." *The Abell Report* 28, no. 5 (2015): 1-28.
- Johnston, John. "Program out to preserve Hamilton county's past." *Cincinnati.com*. January 8, 2014. Accessed February 12, 2017.

<http://www.cincinnati.com/story/news/2014/01/08/program-out-to-preserve-hamilton-countys-past/4365629/>.

Kaufman, Rachel. "Plywood substitute for vacant houses gets national backer." *Next City*. November 22, 2016, <https://nextcity.org/daily/entry/plywood-vacant-houses-boardup-alternative-clearboarding>.

Kelly, Jacques and Erica L. Green. "Allan Tibbels, of Sandtown Habitat for Humanity, dies." *Baltimore Sun*, June 3, 2010.

Kuebler, Brian. "State demolishes city block in east Baltimore through Project C.O.R.E." *WMAR Baltimore*. February 10, 2017. Accessed April 24, 2017. <http://www.abc2news.com/news/region/baltimore-city/state-demolishes-city-block-in-east-baltimore-through-project-core>.

Kutner, Jeremy. "A Rust Belt city tries to shrink its way to success." *Christian Science Monitor*. May 29, 2009. Accessed February 11, 2017. <http://www.csmonitor.com/Business/2009/0529/a-rust-belt-city-tries-to-shrink-its-way-to-success>.

Lanahan, Lawrence. "Who Can Save Sandtown?" *Urbanite Baltimore*. Accessed January 8, 2017. <http://www.urbanitebaltimore.com/100/who-can-save-sandtown/#sthash.cupaUvyk.dpbs>.

Lanks, Belinda. "Creative Shrinkage." *New York Times Magazine*, December 10, 2006.

"Leadership & Education." *Center for Community Progress*. Accessed April 11, 2017, <http://www.communityprogress.net/leadership-and-education-pages-413.php>.

Letter from the Sandtown-Winchester Improvement Association to City Council members, BRG48-31-3-4, Department of Housing and Community Development Planning 1956-1988. Box 8, Folder October-November 1978, Baltimore City Archives, Baltimore, Maryland.

Levine, Marc V. "The failure of economic development in Baltimore—and Milwaukee." *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, May 22, 2015.

Levy, Peter B. "The Dream Deferred: The Assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., and the Holy Week of Uprisings of 1968." In *Baltimore 68': Riots and Rebirth in an American City*, edited by Jessica I. Elfenbein, Thomas L. Hollowak, Elizabeth M. Nix, 3-25. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011.

- Mallach, Alan. *Bringing Buildings Back: from abandoned properties to community assets: a Guidebook for Policymakers and Practitioners*. Montclair, N.J.: New Brunswick, N.J.: National Housing Institute; Distributed by Rutgers University Press, 2006.
- Malter, Jordan. "Baltimore's economy in black and white." *CNN Money*. Accessed October 13, 2016. <http://money.cnn.com/2015/04/29/news/economy/baltimore-economy/>.
- "Managing Change: Rightsizing and Preservation in America." *The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation*. 2014. Accessed March 19, 2017. [https://www.novoco.com/sites/default/files/atoms/files/achp\\_rightsizing\\_report\\_030514.pdf](https://www.novoco.com/sites/default/files/atoms/files/achp_rightsizing_report_030514.pdf).
- Marbella, Jean. "Korean-American merchants face hurdles in rebuilding after Baltimore riot." *Baltimore Sun*, June 13, 2015.
- Marcuse, Peter, Peter Medoff, and Andrea Pereira. "Triage as Urban Policy." *Social Policy* 12, no. 3 (1982): 33-37.
- Marton, Adam, Natalie Sherman, and Caroline Pate. "The Port Covington redevelopment examined." *Baltimore Sun*. Accessed October 14, 2016, <http://data.baltimoresun.com/news/port-covington/>.
- Marx, Paul. "Rouse's failure in Sandtown-Winchester." *Baltimore Sun*, March 13, 2015.
- Metzger, John T. "The Theory and Practice of Equity Planning: An Annotated Bibliography." *Journal of Planning Literature* 11, no. 1 (1996): 112-126.
- "Mission and Goals." *Preservation Rightsizing Network*. Accessed February 7, 2017. <https://rightsizeplace.org/about/mission-and-goals/>.
- "New Housing Unit Nears Completion: Lafayette Courts to Open on Interracial Basis." *Baltimore Sun*, April 8, 1955.
- Nix, Elizabeth M. and Deborah R. Weiner. "Pivot in Perception: The Impact of the 1968 Riots on Three Baltimore Business Districts." In *Baltimore 68'*, edited by Jessica I. Elfenbein, Thomas L. Hollowak, and Elizabeth M. Nix, 180-207. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011.
- Olsen, Joshua. *Better Places, Better Lives: A Biography of James Rouse*. Washington D.C.: The Urban Land Institute, 2003.

- Olson, Karen. "Old West Baltimore: Segregation, African-American Culture, and the Struggle for Equality." In *The Baltimore Book: New Views of Local History*, edited by Elizabeth Fee, Linda Shopes, and Linda Zeidman, 57-79. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991.
- Olson, Sherry H. *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1997.
- Orser, W. Edward. *Blockbusting in Baltimore: The Edmondson Village Story*. Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1994.
- . "Flight to the Suburbs: Suburbanization and Racial Change on Baltimore's West Side." In *The Baltimore Book: New Views of Local History*, edited by Elizabeth Fee, Linda Shopes, and Linda Zeidman, 203-225. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991.
- Page, Max. *Why Preservation Matters*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016.
- Park, Sharon C. "Mothballing Historic Buildings." *National Park Service*. Accessed January 29, 2017, <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/31-mothballing.htm>.
- "Park Support Groups of Baltimore City: The Woodberry Land Trust." *Parks and People Foundation*. 2006.
- Parsons, Kermit C. "Nathaniel Owings and the Freeways: The Baltimore Wars." Partial Manuscript, Cornell University, 1984.
- Pick, Nancy. "Nehemiah project rising from wrecker's dust." *Baltimore Sun*, March 14, 1990.
- Pietila, Antero. *Not In My Neighborhood: How Bigotry Shaped a Great American City*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2010.
- Plyer, Allison. "Population Loss and Vacant Housing in New Orleans neighborhoods." *Greater New Orleans Community Data Center*. February 5, 2011. Accessed March 19, 2017. [https://gnocdc.s3.amazonaws.com/reports/GNOCDC\\_PopulationLossAndVacantHousingInNewOrleansNeighborhoods.pdf](https://gnocdc.s3.amazonaws.com/reports/GNOCDC_PopulationLossAndVacantHousingInNewOrleansNeighborhoods.pdf).
- "Poe Homes come to life with rush," *Baltimore Sun*, October 1, 1940.
- "Policy & Research." *Center for Community Progress*. Accessed April 11, 2017, <http://www.communityprogress.net/policy-and-research-pages-517.php>.

- Popper, Deborah E. and Frank J. Popper. "Small can be beautiful: Coming to terms with decline." *Planning* 68, no. 7 (2002): 20–3.
- Pousson, Eli. "Baltimore's Vacant Housing: A Short History of Demolition Policy." Accessed February 3, 2017.  
[https://cdn.knightlab.com/libs/timeline3/latest/embed/index.html?source=1iJlcj8-9zR4Q3v8FcG4tUB9xqwHzbJaEpkydnNe3WM&font=Default&lang=en&initial\\_zoom=2&height=650](https://cdn.knightlab.com/libs/timeline3/latest/embed/index.html?source=1iJlcj8-9zR4Q3v8FcG4tUB9xqwHzbJaEpkydnNe3WM&font=Default&lang=en&initial_zoom=2&height=650).
- . "What does Project CORE mean for Baltimore's historic neighborhoods." *Baltimore Heritage*. April 19, 2016.  
<https://baltimoreheritage.org/preservation/project-core-mean-baltimores-historic-neighborhoods/#.WJ3yfhIrIxc>.
- "Project C.O.R.E." *Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development*.  
[http://www.dhcd.state.md.us/GIS/Project\\_CORE\\_v2/index.html](http://www.dhcd.state.md.us/GIS/Project_CORE_v2/index.html).
- "Project C.O.R.E. Demolition Map." *Baltimore Housing*.  
<http://cels.baltimorehousing.org/codemap/demoMap.html>.
- Rankin, Robert A. "Helping Residents Rebuild a Blighted Community: "Step by step, block by block, all the housing is to be made decent." *Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 24, 1992.
- Reed, Ingrid W. "The Life and Death of UDAG: An Assessment Based on Eight Projects in Five New Jersey Cities," *Publius* 19, no. 3 (1989): 93-109.
- Rice, Douglas and Barbara Sard, "Decade of neglect has weakened federal low-income housing programs," *Center on Budget and Policy Priorities*. February 24, 2009, <http://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/2-24-09hous.pdf>.
- "Right Sizing America's Shrinking Cities: Results of the Policy Charrette and Model Action Plan." *National Vacant Properties Campaign (Center for Community Progress)*. September 2007.  
[http://www.cudc.kent.edu/projects\\_research/research/rsc\\_final\\_report.pdf](http://www.cudc.kent.edu/projects_research/research/rsc_final_report.pdf).
- Rusk, David. *Baltimore Unbound*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.
- Ryan, Brent D. *Design After Decline: How America Rebuilds Shrinking Cities*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012.
- . "Rightsizing Shrinking Cities: The urban design dimension." In *The City After Abandonment*, edited by Margaret Dewar and June Manning Thomas, 268-288. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012.



- Rybczynski, Witold "Downsizing Cities." *The Atlantic*. October 1995. Accessed March 19, 2017.  
<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1995/10/downsizing-cities/308395/>.
- Rybczynski, Witold and Peter D Linneman. "How to save our shrinking cities." *Public Interest* 135, (1999): 30-44.
- Ryberg-Webster, Stephanie and Kelly L. Kinahan, "Historic Preservation and Urban Revitalization in the Twenty-First Century." *Journal of Planning Literature* 29, no. 2 (2014): 119-139.
- Sabonis, Peter and Matt Hill. "Community+Land+Trust: Tools for Development without displacement." *Baltimore Housing Roundtable*, 2016.
- Sampson, Robert J. and Stephen W. Raudenbush. "Seeing Disorder: Neighborhood Stigma and the Social Construction of "Broken Windows."" *Social Psychology* 67, no. 4 (2004): 319-342.
- Satterthwaite, Ann. "UDAG: Is it the new urban renewal?" *Preservation News* 19, no. 12 (1979): 1-2.
- Schilling, Joseph and Jonathan Logan. "Greening the rust belt: a green infrastructure model for rightsizing American cities." *Journal of the American Planning Association* 74, no. 4 (2008): 451-466.
- Schwartzman, Paul and John Wagner. "As Baltimore mayor, critics say, O'Malley's police tactics sowed distrust." *Washington Post*, April 25, 2015,  
[https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/dc-politics/as-mayor-of-baltimore-omalley-s-policing-strategy-sowed-mistrust/2015/04/25/af81178a-ea9d-11e4-9767-6276fc9b0ada\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.cc62c93828b4](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/dc-politics/as-mayor-of-baltimore-omalley-s-policing-strategy-sowed-mistrust/2015/04/25/af81178a-ea9d-11e4-9767-6276fc9b0ada_story.html?utm_term=.cc62c93828b4).
- Segedy, Jason. "Planning to grow Akron." *City of Akron*. Accessed February 8 2017.  
[http://www.akronohio.gov/cms/PTG\\_Akron\\_Report/planning\\_to\\_grow\\_akron\\_report\\_final\\_\\_2\\_6\\_17\\_.pdf](http://www.akronohio.gov/cms/PTG_Akron_Report/planning_to_grow_akron_report_final__2_6_17_.pdf).
- Shen, Fern. "Highway to Nowhere Coming Down? Not Really." *Baltimore Brew*, September 24, 2010. <https://baltimorebrew.com/2010/09/24/highway-to-nowhere-coming-down-not-really/>.
- . "Residents, civil rights groups sue state over Red Line cancellation." *Baltimore Brew*. December 21, 2015, <https://baltimorebrew.com/2015/12/21/residents-civil-right-groups-sue-state-over-red-line-cancellation/>.

- Sherman, Natalie. "City population shrinks slightly in new estimates." *Baltimore Sun*, March 26, 2015. <http://www.baltimoresun.com/business/bs-bz-census-20150326-story.html>.
- . "New Program aimed at old Baltimore vacants problem gets slow start." *Baltimore Sun*, September 24, 2016.
- . "Vacants remain a drag on the city." *Baltimore Sun*, September 25, 2016.
- Shields, Gerard. "City seeks to raze repaired housing." *Baltimore Sun*, November 6, 1998.
- . "Councilman seeks halt to housing demolition." *Baltimore Sun*, September 29, 1999.
- Shopes, Linda. "Fells Point: Community and Conflict in a Working-Class Neighborhood." In *The Baltimore Book: New Views of Local History*, edited by Elizabeth Fee, Linda Shopes, and Linda Zeidman, 121-153. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991.
- . "Oral History and Community Involvement: The Baltimore Neighborhood Heritage Project." In *Presenting the Past: Essays on History and the Public*, edited by Susan Porter Benson, Stephen Brier, and Roy Rosenzweig, 249-263. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986.
- Siegel, Eric. "Slow pace of renovations hurts house-selling program." *Baltimore Sun*, October 19, 2006.
- Simms, Barry. "Property owners battle city over Vacants to Value." *WBAL*. February 29, 2016. <http://www.wbalv.com/article/property-owners-battle-city-over-vacants-to-value/7099211>.
- Simmons, Melody. "Baltimore runs out of dollars for mayor's Vacants to Value homebuyers' incentive fund." *Baltimore Business Journal*. September 1, 2016.
- Smith, Sandy. "Could Better Transportation Planning Have Saved Baltimore's Red Line?" *Next City*. June 30, 2015, <https://nextcity.org/daily/entry/hogan-maryland-purple-line-no-red-line-baltimore>.
- Snyder, Ron. "One year later: looking back at the Baltimore riots." *WBAL-TV*. April 28, 2016, <http://www.wbalv.com/article/one-year-later-looking-back-at-the-baltimore-riots/7100345>.
- Starr, Roger. "Making New York Smaller." *New York Times*, November 14, 1976.

- “State Revitalization Programs FY2017 Application Guidelines.” *Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development*.  
[https://projectportal.dhcd.state.md.us/Documentation/MDDHCD/SRP\\_FY17\\_Guidelines.pdf](https://projectportal.dhcd.state.md.us/Documentation/MDDHCD/SRP_FY17_Guidelines.pdf).
- “Strength To Love 2.” *Farm Alliance of Baltimore*. Accessed March 20, 2017,  
<http://www.farmalliancebaltimore.org/farms/strength-to-love-ii/>.
- “Stronger Neighborhoods Through Strategic Decisions: ReLocal Pilot Project.” *PlaceEconomics*. 2013.
- “Technical Assistance.” *Center for Community Progress*. Accessed April 11, 2017,  
<http://www.communityprogress.net/capacity-building-pages-45.php>.
- The Comprehensive Plan for Baltimore (draft). *Planning Commission, Department of Planning, City of Baltimore*. August 2000.
- “The Reinvestment Fund at 30: Insights and New Directions.” *Cascade* no. 89. 2015.  
[https://www.philadelphiafed.org/community-development/publications/cascade/89/04\\_the-reinvestment-fund](https://www.philadelphiafed.org/community-development/publications/cascade/89/04_the-reinvestment-fund).
- “The value of vacants.” *Baltimore Sun*, November 12, 2015.
- “The Youngstown 2010 Citywide Plan.” *City of Youngstown*. 2005. Accessed February 7, 2017, 31.  
[http://www.cityofyoungstownoh.com/about\\_youngstown/youngstown\\_2010\\_plan/final\\_plan/Ytown2010\\_chapter4.pdf](http://www.cityofyoungstownoh.com/about_youngstown/youngstown_2010_plan/final_plan/Ytown2010_chapter4.pdf).
- Thompson, Andrew. “What Philly should have learned from Baltimore about land banks.” *Philadelphia Magazine*. December 11, 2013.  
<http://www.phillymag.com/news/2013/12/11/darrell-clarke-baltimore-land-bank/>.
- Tomlan, Michael A. *Historic Preservation: Caring for our Expanding Legacy*. New York: Springer International Publishing, 2015.
- U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1790-1990. *Maryland State Archives*. Accessed December 11, 2016, <https://baltimorecityhistory.files.wordpress.com/2011/08/pop1.jpg>.
- “V2V Recognition and Awards.” *Baltimore Housing*. Accessed January 19, 2017,  
<http://www.vacantstovalue.org/Awards.aspx>.
- Walsh, Joan. “Baltimore’s shame is America’s shame: how job flight and police brutality spelled doom for Freddie Gray’s neighborhood.” *Salon*. April 28, 2015,

[http://www.salon.com/2015/04/28/freddie\\_gray%E2%80%99s\\_neighborhood\\_why\\_sandtown\\_winchester\\_remains\\_hopeless/](http://www.salon.com/2015/04/28/freddie_gray%E2%80%99s_neighborhood_why_sandtown_winchester_remains_hopeless/).

Weiner, Deborah. "Tour visits Freddie Gray's neighborhood." *WBAL-TV*. February 25, 2016. <http://www.wbalv.com/article/tour-visits-freddie-gray-s-neighborhood/7099120>.

Wells, Carrie. "Five years in, Vacants to Value shows mixed results." *Baltimore Sun*, November 12, 2015.

Wenger, Yvonne. "Rawlings-Blake signs off on Port Covington public financing." *Baltimore Sun*, September 28, 2016.  
<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/maryland/baltimore-city/politics/bs-md-ci-port-covington-bill-signing-20160928-story.html>.

—. "Sarah's Hope shelter doubles in size to serve homeless families." *Baltimore Sun*, October 8, 2015.

—. "Saving Sandtown-Winchester: decade-long, multimillion-dollar investment questioned." *Baltimore Sun*, May 10, 2015.

"What Can ED Learn from Baltimore's Sandtown?" *Journal of Applied Research in Economic Development* 12, (2015). <http://journal.c2er.org/2015/09/what-can-ed-learn-from-baltimores-sandtown/>.

Wheeler, Timothy B. "Habitat group rehabs 300th home in Sandtown." *Baltimore Sun*, December 11, 2011.

Will, George F. "Bright Replaces Blight in Baltimore." *Buffalo News*, January 3, 1996.

Williams, Leslie. "Home is where the hard work is." *Baltimore Sun*, March 5, 1990.

Witt, Susan and Robert Swann. "Land: challenge and opportunity." In *Rooted in the Land: Essays on community and place*, edited by William Vitek and Wes Jackson, 244-252. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996.

Yeoman, Barry. "Left Behind in Sandtown." *City Limits*. January 1, 1998.  
<http://barryyeoman.com/1998/01/left-behind-in-sandtown-baltimore/>.

"Youngstown 2010." *City of Youngstown, Ohio*. Accessed April 29, 2017,  
[http://www.youngstownohio.gov/about\\_youngstown/youngstown\\_2010/index.aspx](http://www.youngstownohio.gov/about_youngstown/youngstown_2010/index.aspx).

Zaleski, Andrew. "Build it back: inside Baltimore's quest to rehab blocks of vacant housing." *Curbed*. November 30, 2016,  
<http://www.curbed.com/2016/11/30/13769138/baltimore-vacants-to-value>.